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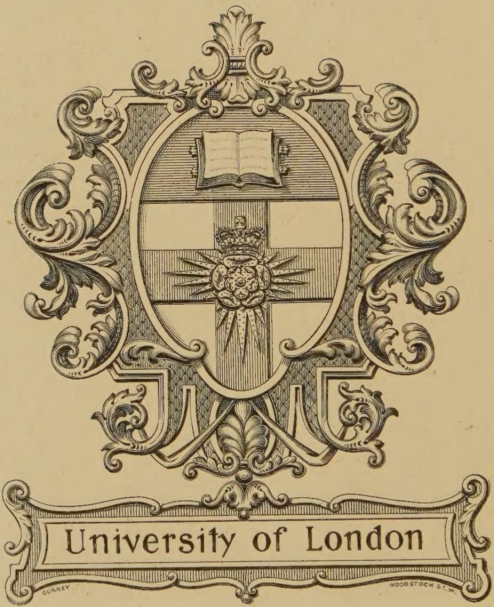

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 30TH MARCH, 1906.

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with Farleton; Kewstoke-cum-Milton; Kingsdown Kingswood; King's Worthy; Lancaster (eight); Leamington; Littleborough (two); Little Hallingbury; Little Paxton (two); Llandegley Llowes (two); Loddington; Long Crendon; Longney; Longton (two); Maids Moreton (two); Maidstone; Maisey Hampton; Manchester (two); Middleham; Middleton (two); Mosley Common (two); Nacton; Newdigate (two); New Hey; Okewood; Old and New Shoreham; Overton (two); Penwortham; Rodborough; Rotherfield Peppard; Ryton; St. Giles, Oxford; St. Marylebone; St. Mary the Less, Durham (two); St. Nicholas, Durham; St. Thomas's, Pendleton (two); Scruton; Sevenhampton, Brockhampton, and Charlton Abbots; Sherburn (two); Slyne with Hest; Southrop; Stockton-on-Tees; Thame (two); Totteridge; Tuddenham St. Mary; Two Mile Hill; Upton; Upton Scudamore; Walkden (two); Weaste; Westleigh (two); Whatley; Wheathamstead; White Notley (two); Whittingham; Willesden (two); Witton Gilbert (two); Woodmansterne (two); Worle; Worming Hall (two); Woughton on the Green (two); and Wraxall; to lie upon the Table 15

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IRISH TEACHERS' PENSION RULES, 1906.—Paper [presented 21st March]; to be printed. [No. 100] 16

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.—Copy presented of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow for the year ending September 30th, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 101.] 16

COURT OF PROBATE DIVISION (HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE) (IRELAND).—Annual Account presented of Receipts and Disbursements for the year ended December 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 16

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).—Return ordered, "setting forth the names and addresses of all persons who have been committed to unlimited terms of imprisonment for Contempt of Court in Ireland from the 1st day of January, 1905, to the 28th day of February, 1906; the names of the Judges who issued the orders of attachment; the charges against the persons attached; and the duration of imprisonment in each case in which the order for attachment was executed (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1905).

Name of prison.	Name of person committed.	Address.	Name of judge who issued order of attachment.	Charge against person attached.	Duration of imprisonment in each case in which the order for attaachment was executed.

—(*Mr. Mooney*) 16

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THE COLONIAL OFFICE AND THE NATAL CABINET—Question Mr. Staveley Hill (Staffordshire, Kingswinford); Answer, Mr. Churchill 17

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THE ANNUAL REPORT OF REGISTRAR GENERAL FOR IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. McKenna 17

POSTAL SERVICE AT CHEDWORTH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Essex (Gloucestershire, Cirencester); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 18

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ARMY OFFICERS—FORFEITURE OF PENSION FOR MISCONDUCT.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Haldane 20

PROMOTION IN THE ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, Mr. Haldane 20

ARMY HORSE BEDDING ON PEAT MOSS.—Question, Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 21

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Police (Superannuation) Bill:—Mr. William Bridgeman; and had appointed in substitution: Viscount Helmsley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Hudson (Newcastle-on-Tyne) 21

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. F. E. Smith (Liverpool, Walton) 28
Mr. Horridge (Manchester, E.) 33
Mr. E. Edwards (Hanley) 37
Mr. Clancy (Dublin Co., N.) 39
Mr. Henry (Shropshire, Wellington) 43
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) 44
Mr. Dobson (Plymouth) 45
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 47
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 51
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 54

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Motion made and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned." (*Mr. Wyndham.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 66 ; Noes, 370. (Division List No. 35.)

Mr. Lambton (*Durham, S.E.*) 65
Mr. Whitehead (*Essex, S.E.*) 68
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 73

Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 404 ; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 36.)

Question put accordingly.

The House divided :—Ayes, 416 ; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 37.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Tuesday, April 24th.

Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge Bill).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday next.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 2nd APRIL, 1906.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with in respect of the petition for the following Bill :—Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Millwall Dock ; North Metropolitan Tramways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 85

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Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; The Earl of Dartney, Chairman of the Select Committee, reported that the Earl of Harrowby was not present on Saturday last, and that the Committee continued sitting in the absence of the Earl of Harrowby, all parties having consented thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 85

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 85

Channel Ferry Railway and Quay Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn; the Order made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 85

Llandrindod Wells Gas Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the Day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with - 85

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]; Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 86

SCOTTISH PROVIDENT INSTITUTION BUILDINGS, LIMITED—(PETITION FOR BILL).—Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 86

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 86

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3541. Italy (Foreign Trade of Italy).

No. 3542. Germany (Finances of the Kingdom of Saxony).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table. 86

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools: of—

Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Coldhurst; Oldham; and Denton St. Anne's; teachers in schools at St. Anne's, Denton.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 86

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The Earl of Denbigh 87
Lord Denman 104
Lord Reay 109
The Earl of Lathom 113
The Earl of Erroll 114
The President of the Board of Agriculture (*Earl Carrington*) 116
The Marquess of Lansdowne 119
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 122

House adjourned at ten minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]; Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation Bill [Lords]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 124

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 had not been complied with, viz.:—Oldham and Saddleworth District Tramways (Abandonment) Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 124

CROWN LANDS BILL AND DEAN FOREST BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House on the 28th day of March, That, in the case of the following Bills, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Crown Lands Bill. Dean Forest Bill 124

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Dowlais Gas Bill. Read a third time, and passed 125

Watford Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time .. 125

Crystal Palace Company Bill [LORDS]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed 125

Milford Docks Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 125

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Edinburgh Corporation Bill (By Order); North East London Railway Bill (by order); Read a second time, and committed 125

South Metropolitan Electric Light and Power Bill (By Order).—Second Reading deferred till Monday, 30th April 125

London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill (By Order).—Order [26th March] for Committal of the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill read and discharged, Bill committed to a Committee of nine Members, five to be nominated by the House and four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill already presented be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their council, or agents, be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider, with special reference to the proposals to the Bill, the best means of providing for the supply of electrical energy in bulk, and for power and motive purposes, and to report thereon.—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 125

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland Act, 1899, relating to the County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road)." [County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to repeal the Deeds of Settlement of the Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society from the date of its registration as a limited company, and to enlarge the scope of operations of the society, and to make provision for the future government of the society and the management of its affairs; and for other purposes." [Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords.] 126

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 126

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Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Bridlington; and, Stanley, and other places in Scotland; to lie upon the Table 126

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LOCAL AUTHORITY (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Great Yarmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 126

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Accrington (two); Appley Bridge; Atherton; Barnston (two); Bearley (two); Benhilton; Bilsington (two); Bishopswood (two); Bonnington and Hurst (two); Box; Brantham; Breinton Common; Broughton (two); Burnmoor; Bury (three); Carnforth; Chessington; Chilthorne Domer (two); Coldhurst; Congleton; Corton Denham; Croston (two); Dilhorne; Douglas; Egton; Egton cum Newland; Esprick (two); Fallowfield; Farnham Royal; Farnham St. Martin; Felling; Frant (two); Freckleton (two); Garboldisham; Grafham; Grayswood; Great Saxham; Great Whelnetham; Hampreston; Hampstead; Hatfield; Haskin; Higham St. Mary; Hollowell; Horton; Iddesleigh (two); Ingram; Jarrow-on-Tyne; Kessingland; Lockhampstead (two); Limington (two); Longgrove (three); Longsight (two); Loppington; Marstow Martock (two); Matravers; Mellor; Nacton; Nash; Oldham (two); Parbold; Poplar; Primrose Hill; Radcliffe St. Anne's (two); Radcliffe Hall; Ranmore; Rusland; St. Andrew's, Manchester (three); St. Anne, Oxenhall; St. Anne's-on-Sea (two); St. Briavel's; St. Clears (two); St. Margaret's, Low Wray (two); Sherborne (two); Silverdale; Stixwould; Takeley (two); Taverham; Tenterden; Tolleshunt D'Arcy; Uggeshall; Ulverston; Upper Holloway; Upton Bishop; Virginia Water; Walton d'Eivile; Weeton (two); Werneth; Winchester; Winston (two); Wood Ditton; Yerbeston (two); and Yarlgrave; to lie upon the Table 126

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INCOME TAX (ASSESSMENTS).—Return [presented 8th March]; to be printed. [No. 102.] 127

ARMY.—Copy presented, of General Annual Report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 127

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).—Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 127

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3541 and 3542 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 127

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Inquiry into Charities (County of Berks): Further Return relative thereto [ordered 28th March, 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 104.]

Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Devon); Return relative thereto [ordered 26th July, 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 105.]

Public Records (Inland Revenue Department); Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents in the Department of the Inland Revenue which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act.]

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Union of Benefices Act (Saint Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square); Copy of Scheme under the Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of Saint Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square [by Act] .. 128

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THE ROYAL CANAL.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 172

SIR FRANCIS HOPWOOD.—Questions, Lord Turnour (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 173

VACCINATION OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. Barker; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 174

METROPOLITAN COMMON POOR FUND.—Question, Mr. Barker; Answer, Mr. John Burns 174

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.—PAUPERS' DEPOSITS.—Question, Mr. Brunner (Lancashire, Leigh); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 175

DOUGLAS POST OFFICE STAFF HOLIDAYS.—Question, Mr. Vivian (Birkenhead); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 175

VACCINATION OF TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald (Leicester); Answer, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 176

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT—INSPECTORS.—Questions, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answers, Sir Edward Strachey 176

NEW GOVERNMENT OFFICES.—Questions, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith); Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 177

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ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Questions, Viscount Helmsley (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) and Mr. Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answers, Mr. McKenna 178

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMISSION.—Questions, Colonel Lockwood; Answers, Mr. McKenna 179

MOTOR CAR SERVICES FOR ROSS-SHIRE FISHING INDUSTRIES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 179

FISHERMEN'S DWELLINGS AT STORNOWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 179

CROFTERS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Mr. Sinclair 180

SCOTTISH SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Questions, Mr. Menzies (Lanarkshire, S.); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 180

SCOTTISH ROYAL BURGHS.—Question, Mr. J. A. Bryce (Inverness Burghs); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 181

CORK LAND TRANSFER REGISTRAR.—Questions, Mr. Sloan, Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Lonsdale; Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange) 181

IRISH LAND—FUTURE TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 183

MAINTENANCE OF PAUPER LUNATICS.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 183

IRISH EMIGRATION.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 184

HORSE RACING IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Cullinan (Tipperary, S.) and Mr. Kilbride; Answers, Mr. Bryce 184

LOANS TO IRISH TENANTS.—Questions, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answers, Mr. McKenna 185

MINISTERS AS COMPANY DIRECTORS.—Questions, Mr. Bottomley (Hackney, S.); and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 186

THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE.—Questions, Lord Turnour and an Hon. Member; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 186

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R.); Elland); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 187

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.—Question, Lord Balcarres; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 187

THE NATAL CRISIS.—Questions, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 187

ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, Member for Leicester, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The way in which martial law in Natal is being applied and the imminent and grave dangers to the native subjects of the Crown involved in its administration," and the pleasure of the House being signified :

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day 190

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

NEW BILLS.

Local Authorities Officers Bill.—"To enable local authorities to adopt the provisions of The Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act, 1896, and to give officers of such authorities a right of appeal," presented by Mr. Luke White ; supported by Mr. Barnard, Captain Balfour, Sir Joseph F. Leese, Dr. Napier, and Mr. Henry Forster ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 141.] 190

Vagrant Children Bill.—"To provide for the better protection of children of vagrant parents," presented by Mr. Spicer ; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Toulmin, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Lewis Haslam, Mr. Vivian, and Mr. Maclean ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.] 191

Elementary Education Bill.—"To provide secular education, periodical medical examination of, and food for children attending State-supported schools," presented by Mr. Thorne ; supported by Mr. Barnes, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Parker ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th May, and to be printed. [Bill 143.] 191

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection : That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill ; Mr. Herbert Samuel, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Ure.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee of Selection : That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill ; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Billson.

Reports to lie upon the Table 191

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE)—

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the consideration of the existing Standing Orders with proposed Amendments, if under discussion at twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 320 ; Noes, 87. (Division List No. 38.) .. 192

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE) (SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE).—Standing Order No. 1 [28th February, 1888, and 2nd May, 1902], read.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 197

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph 1, line 2, to leave out the words 'Wednesday and.'"—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 201
Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 202
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 203
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 204
Mr. Lutterell (*Devonshire, Tavistock*) 205
Sir F. Dixon Hartland (*Middlesex, Uxbridge*) 206
Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 207
Mr. Theodore Taylor (*Lancashire, Radcliffe*) 207
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 208
Mr. Eugene Wason (*Clackmannan and Kinross*) 209
Mr. Forster (*Kent, Sevenoaks*) 209

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 255 ; Noes, 180. (Division List No. 39.)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 217

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph 1, line 2, to leave out the words 'two of the clock for an afternoon sitting, and at nine of the clock for an evening sitting,' and to insert the words 'a quarter to three of the clock—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 221
Mr. Laurence Hardy 222
Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 224
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 225
Mr. Samuel Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 226
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 227
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 227
Mr. Crombie (*Kincardineshire*) 228
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 229
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 230
Mr. Nussey (*Pontefract*) 230
Mr. Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 231
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (*Wilts., Chippenham*) 232
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 233
Mr. Blake (*Longford, S.*) 233

Question put and negatived.

Question proposed, "That these words 'a quarter to three of the clock' be there inserted."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

> "To leave out the words 'a quarter to'."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 234
Sir John Redmond 234

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 377 ; Noes, 88. (Division List No. 40.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Words inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (2), line 1, by leaving out the words "one of the clock at the eveninig sitting," and inserting the words, "half-past eleven of the clock"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Amendment proposed—

> "To the Standing Order, in paragraph (3), line 1, to leave out the words, 'half-past seven of the clock and at midnight,' and insert the words, 'eleven of the clock,'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 239
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 239
Mr. Keir Hardie 240
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 240

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 66 ; Noes, 379. (Division List No. 41.)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to

Words inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (3), line 2, by leaving out the words "half-past."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

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Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph (5), line 1, to leave out the words 'twelve and half-past,' and insert the words 'eleven and,'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof."

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate arising.

And it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MARTIAL LAW IN NATAL—MOTION FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. J. R. Macdonald (*Leicester*) 245
Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 257

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. J. R. Macdonald.*)

Captain Kincaid-Smith (*Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon*) 255
Mr. J. M. Robertson (*Northumberland, Tyneside*) 257
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 259
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Churchill, Oldham*) 266
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin Co., S.*) 277
Mr. Fell (*Great Yarmouth*) 279

And, it being midnight, the Motion for Adjournment lapsed without Question put.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.—Return ordered, "relative to the Irish Land Purchase Fund created by Section 27 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, and the applications for advances and other claims thereon up to the 31st day of January, 1906."

I. The Irish Land Purchase Fund at the 31st day of January, 1906.

	Nominal Amount.	Amount in Cash.
	£	£
Sums placed to credit of the Capital Account of the Irish Land Purchase Fund :—		
(1) Guaranteed 2¾ per cent. Stock - - -		
(2) Sinking Fund,invested in further advances -		
£		
Deduct amount assigned to Capital Account of the Irish Land Purchase Aid Fund, for percentage payable under Section 47 - - -		
Net Total available for advances - - - £		

II.—Sums Advanced and Sums Allocated or Distributed up to the 31st day of January, 1906.

	Lodged in Bank or otherwise Advanced.	Allocated or Distributed, including moneys transferred by the Land Commission to the Land Judge's Court.
	£	£
Irish Land Commission.		
Direct sales.—Landlord and tenant -		
Direct sales.—Land Judge's Court -		
Section 40, Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896		
Congested District Board, Sections 72 and 77, Irish Land Act, 1903 - -		which includes
Estates Commissioners.		£
Direct sales of estates to tenants - -		transferred to Land Judge's Court.
Purchase of estates, Section 6, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - -		
Purchase of estates, Section 7, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - -		
Purchase of untenanted land, Section 8, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - -		
Congested Districts Board. Section 79, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - -		
Totals - - £		

III. Applications for Advances in Direct Sales of Estates to Tenants, offers accepted to sell Estates under Sections 6, 7, 8, and Section 79 of The Irish Land Act, 1903, representing definite claims on the Fund, from the commencement of the Act up to the 31st day of January, 1906, with the amount thereof, including Paid Cases.

	Amount. £
Irish Land Commission.	
Direct sales—Landlord and tenant - - - - - -	
Direct sales—Land Judge's Court - - - - - -	
Section 40, Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896 - - -	
Congested Districts Board, Section 72 and 77, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - - - - -	
Estates Commissioners.	
Direct sales of estates to tenants - - - - - -	
Purchase of estates, Section 6, Irish Land Act, 1903 - -	
Purchase of estates, Section 7, Irish Land Act, 1903 - -	
Purchase of untenanted land, Section 8, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - - - - - -	
Congested Districts Board, Section 79, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - - - - - -	
Total - - - - - £	

—(*Viscount Castlereagh.*) 280

Hayes Urban District Council.—Return ordered, "of Copy of Letter from the Local Government Board to the Hayes Urban District Council, dated the 19th day of February, 1906, relative to the application of the Council for sanction to borrow further money for works of sewerage and sewage disposal."—(*Mr. John Ward*) 283

Adjourned at eight minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1906.

The Lord Kilmaine took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bute (English and Welsh) Estates.—Petition for a Private Bill, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English Judges 285

Standing Orders Committee.—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that the Corporation of Drogheda shall not be empowered to give such a guarantee as is provided for in Clause 4, unless the consent of a majority of the ratepayers to such guarantee be first obtained. Read and agreed to 285

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Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 285

Knott End Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported, without Amendment 285

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Bridgwater Canals Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 285

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Brought from the Commons 285

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Dowlais Gas Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 285

South Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railway Bill [H.L.]; Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company Bill [H.L.]; Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:

E. Westmorland, V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*), L. Newton (chairman), L. Faber, L. Joicey; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.. 285

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cumberland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:

E. Lauderdale (chairman), E. Cathcart, V. Ridley, L. Rossmore, L. Estcourt, agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 286

Haslingden Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]; Crediton Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:

D. Newcastle, E. Devon, E. Latham, L. Leigh, L. Ludlow (chairman) agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 286

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 44) 287

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools.

1. Of teachers in schools at Ardwick; Stockport; Withington; Pendleton; Heaton Norris (2); Manchester (2); Atherton; Onkenrad.

2. Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Denshaw; Manchester (7); Oldham.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 287

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS, ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3543. France (French West Africa).

No. 3544. Germany. 287

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 287

PUBLIC RECORDS (INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents in the Department of the Inland Revenue which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office 287

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1906, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 288

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UNION OF BENEFICES ACTS, 1860 AND 1898.

Scheme of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for effecting an union of the Benefices of St. Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell, and of Holy Trinity, Gough Square, and for effecting certain other measures incidental to or arising out of such union.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 43.) 288

SUNDAY TRADING.—Ordered, That the evidence taken by the Select Committee on the Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.] during the session of 1905 be referred to the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading of the present session.. 288

Elections (Meetings in School Rooms) Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Burghclere 288

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Burghclere*).

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 289
The Marquess of Londonderry 296
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 299

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

NAVAL CADETS.

Lord Shuttleworth 301
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 303
Earl Cawdor 307

ANTI-JEWISH OUTRAGES IN RUSSIA.

Lord Northbourne 309
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 311
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 313
The Marquess of Lansdowne 315

Limited Partnerships Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order); amendments made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 316

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—

E. Mansfield, L. Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*), agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. 316

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [Lords]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]; Mersey Railway Bill [Lords]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills. 320

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 320

PETITIONS.

Conventents and Conventual Establishments.—Petition from Altrincham, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 320

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Liverpool; and, Todmorden; to lie upon the Table 320

Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—Petition from Tormorden, in favour; to lie upon the Table 320

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against Alteration of Law; From Abington; Adderbury (two); Alnwick; Alvescot (two); Amble (two); Armitage; Ashtead; Ashton-under-Lyne; Ashton-on-Trent (two); Barling Magna (two); Bath; Bathford; Beckington (two); Beddington; Bexhill; Bilston; Birkenhead (three); Blackburn; Blickling; Blo' Norton (two); Bodicote; Bolton (two); Botleys and Lyne; Bradley; Broadwell (two); Bromley; Bryngwyn (two); Buckland Dinham; Castle Cary; Castleton; Chale; Chasetown; Cheltenham; Christian Malford (two); Cranborne (two); Devizes (two); Dobcross (two); Dorking; Eastbourne (ten); East Dean; East Markham; East Quantockshead; East Rainton-cum-Mossley; East Stockwith; Eccles; Edlingham; Ewshott (two); Flixton (two); Foxley (two); Firle and Beddingham; Frampton Cotterell; Goodleigh; Gorton; Greenhead; Grittleton; Hailsham; Hellingley; Hempsted; Henstridge; Herbranston (two); Heywood (two); Highman; Holbrooks; Holmwood; Hooton Pagnell (two); Horton-cum-Piddington (two); Hulme (two); Hurstpierpoint (two); Hutton; Ickham (two); Islington; Jacobstowe (two); Jevington; Kidwelly (two); Kilsby; Kingswood (three); Kirkby Lonsdale; Kirton; Langport (two); Little Houghton; Little Moss; Little Yeldham; Llangatock; Lingoed; Llanvihangel Crucorney; Lockwood; Lound (two); Lumb in Rossendale; Marbury (two); Market Harborough; Nether Worton; New Groombridge (two); Northaw (two); Norton; Oldham; Old Sodbury (two); Over Worton; Oxted, Limpsfield, and Tatsfield; Paddington; Padiham; Patshull; Pendleton; Pevensey; Pitminster (two); Pitsea; Polebrooke; Quinton (two); Royston; St. Oswald's, Manchester (two); St. Paul's, Werneth; St. Thomas, Aldcliffe; Sandhurst; Shaw (two); Shenstone; Shirburn; Shrewsbury; Sibbertoft; Silkstone (two); Silton (two); South Warnborough (two); Stockland; Stodmarsh; Stogumber; Stoke Doyle; Stonall in Shenstone; Stotfold; Sutton (two); Swalcliffe; Swindon; Thorley (two); Totland Bay (two); Twyford (two); Twywell (two); Wadworth (two); Wartling; Wells; West Bradley; West Bromwich;

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Westcott (two); Westhoughton (six); West Retford; Whittington; Whitchurch (two); Widford; Willingdon (three); Windermere; Winterbourne Down; and, Withycombe (two); to lie upon the Table 320

Relief of Necessitous School Children.—Petition from Cockermouth, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 322

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—Petition from Manchester, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 322

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Monmouthshire)—Petition from Briercliffe, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 322

Vaccination Acts.—Petition from Padiham, for repeal; to lie upon the Table .. 322

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—Petitions for alteration; from Carlisle; Leicester; Norwich; and, Oldham; to lie upon the Table 322

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Education (Scotland) (General Reports).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 322

East India (Loans raised in England).—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.] 322

Hayes Urban District Council.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; *Mr. John Ward*]; to lie upon the Table 322

Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Post).—Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 13) Warrant 1906, dated 22nd March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 322

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3543 and 3544 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.. 323

Penny Postage.—Copy ordered, "of Letters addressed to the Postmaster-General by the hon. Member for Canterbury, dated October 1904, and February 1906, on the subject of Universal Penny Postage (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 34, of Session 1887)."—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton*) 323

Government Departments Securities.—Return ordered, "of the Amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March, 1906, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 162, of Session 1905) :—

£2½ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	£2¾ per Cent. War Loan.	Other Securities.	
				Annuities for terms of years.	Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills.

—*Mr. McKenna* 324

Local Contributions (Ireland).—Return ordered, "of all Moneys contributed out of the rates by the county council and other local bodies in each county in Ireland during each financial year since the establishment of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, for the purposes of schemes under The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899."—(*Mr. Ginnell*) 324

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Married Marines—Money in Lieu of Rations.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn (Devonport) ; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 323

The Royal Commission on Poor Laws.—Question, Sir W. Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) ; Answer, Mr. John Burns 324

Close Time for Herrings in Scottish Waters.—Question, Mr. Alexander Cross (Glasgow, Camlachie) ; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 325

Meeting of the London Immigration Board.—Question, Sir W. Evans Gordon ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 325

Import Tax on the Gold Coast Colony—Use of Revenue Derived Therefrom.—Question, Mr. Nolan (Louth, S.) ; Answer, Mr. Churchill 325

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Inspection of Imported Boneless Meat.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) ; Answer, Mr. John Burns 327

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacturers, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Kearley and Mr. Runciman; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Bennett, Mr. Edward Dunn, Mr. Charles Nicholson, and Mr. Essex.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Mr. James Stuart; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Leif Jones.

Reports to lie upon the Table 372

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.—Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed, [No. 107.]

Bill, as amended, (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144] 373

NEW MEMBER MADE THE AFFIRMATION REQUIRED BY LAW.—Franklin Thomasson, esquire, for the Parliamentary Borough of Leicester 373

NEW BILL.

Municipal Corporations (Election of Aldermen) Bill.—"To amend The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, as to Election of Aldermen," presented by Mr. Barran; supported by Mr. Armitage, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. J. W. Benn, Mr. Toulmin, Sir Charles McLaren, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 145.] .. 373

STREET BETTING.

Mr. Bottomley (*Hackney, S.*) 374

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to prohibit Street Betting; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Bottomley*).

Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 376

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And, the Motion being opposed, Mr. SPEAKER put the Question in pursuance of Standing Order No. 11.

Question negatived.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).

Motion made, and Question put, " That the Proceedings on the consideration of the existing Standing Orders with proposed Amendments, if under discussion on the interruption of Business at this Afternoon's Sitting, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business at this Evening's Sitting."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 335 ; Noes, 64. (Division List No. 42). .. 377

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE)

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed [2nd April] to Standing Order No. 1 (Sittings of the House)

Which Amendment was—

" In paragraph (5), line 1, instead of the words last omitted, to insert the words ' eleven and.' "—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order further amended in paragraph (5) line 2, by leaving out the words " and after the business under consideration at half-past Seven of the clock has been disposed of, no other business shall be taken."

In paragraph (7), line 4, by leaving out the word " twelve," and inserting the word "eleven " instead thereof.

Amendment proposed—

In paragraph (7), lines 6 and 7, to leave out " on the interruption of business at this afternoon's sitting," and insert " when the business is postponed."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order.

Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 381
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 382
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, W.*) 383
Sir Francis Lowe (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*) 383
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 384

Question put, and negatived.

Question, " That the words, ' when the business is postponed ' be inserted," put and agreed to.

Words inserted accordingly.

Standing Order further amended, in Paragraph (7), line 8, by leaving out the words " at this evening's sitting."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Amendment proposed—

" In paragraph (8), line 4, to leave out ' twelve ' and insert ' eleven.' —(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' twelve ' stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 384
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 385

Question put, and agreed to.

Question, " That ' eleven ' be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Word inserted accordingly.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (9), line 1, by inserting after the word " chairman," the words " or deputy-chairman."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Duration of Friday Sittings.

Standing Order No. 2 read.

And amended in line 3, by leaving out the word " six," and inserting the words " half-past five "—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Termination of Friday's Sittings.

Standing Order No. 3 read.

And amended in line 1, by leaving out the word " six," and inserting the words " half-past five "—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Arrangement of Public Business.

Standing Order No. 4 read.

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

" In paragraph (a), line 2, to leave out the words ' the evening sittings,' and insert the words ' after half-past eight '—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, " That the words ' the evening sittings,' stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. Akers-Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 387
Mr. William Redmond 387

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Mr. Higham (Yorks, W.R., Sowerby) 388
Sir Francis Lowe 388
Mr. Forster (Kent, Sevenoaks) 388
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 388
Mr. Laurence Hardy 389
Mr. Arthur Lee (Hants, Fareham) 389

Question put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the words 'after half-past eight,' be there inserted."

Mr. William Redmond 390

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—
"To leave out the words 'half-past.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 390

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Proposed Amendment amended—

"By leaving out the word 'half,' and inserting the words 'a quarter' instead thereof."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Words, as amended, inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (b), line 1, by leaving out the words "at the evening sittings of," and inserting the words "after a quarter past eight on."

In paragraph (b), line 3, by inserting after the words "of government business," the words "and any government business then under consideration shall, without Question put, be postponed until the business having precedence of it is disposed of."

In paragraph (c), line 1, by leaving out the words "at the evening sittings," and inserting the words "during the whole," instead thereof.

In paragraph (d), line 2, by leaving out the words "evening sittings, and at all Friday."

In paragraph (e), line 1, by leaving out the words "At the evening sittings at which," and inserting the words "after a quarter past eight when," instead thereof.

And in paragraph (f), line 1, by leaving out the words "all afternoon sittings," and inserting the words "the sittings on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Standing Order No. 8 read, and amended in paragraph (1), line 2, by leaving out the words "the evening sittings," and inserting the words "a quarter past eight," instead thereof.

In paragraph (2), line 2, by leaving out the words "fifteen minutes after two," and inserting the word "three," instead thereof.

In paragraph (3), line 1, by leaving out the words "the beginning of an evening sitting after," and inserting the words "a quarter past —eight on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, or as soon thereafter as," instead thereof.

In paragraph (3), line 3, by leaving out the words "from an afternoon sitting."

In paragraph (4), line 1, by leaving out the words "At an evening sitting at which government business has not precedence."

And in line 3, by leaving out the words "a quarter past ten," and inserting the words "half-past nine," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. 9 read, and amended by leaving out paragraph (2), and inserting the words "Questions shall be taken on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, after private business has been disposed of, and not later than three of the clock," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Another Amedment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph (3), line 1, to leave out the words 'five minutes before three,' and insert the words, a quarter before four'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the words 'a quarter before four' be there inserted."

Mr. William Redmond 393

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

"To leave out the words 'a quarter before.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'a quarter before four' stand part of the Amendment."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 394
Mr. Forster 394
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 395
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 395
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 396
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 398

Question put.

The House divided.—Ayes, 291; Noes, 147. (Division List No. 43.)

Words inserted.

Amendment proposed—

> "In paragraph (5), line 3, to leave out the words 'five minutes before three,' and insert the words 'a quarter before four.'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. Laurence Hardy 401
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 403

Question put and negatived.

Question "That the words 'a quarter before four' be there inserted, put, and agreed to."

Words inserted.

ADJOURNMENT ON MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE.

Standing Order No. 10 read.

And amended in line 2 by leaving out the words "at the afternoon sitting," and inserting the words "on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday," instead thereof.

In line 5 by leaving out the words "at an afternoon sitting."

And in line 13 by leaving out the words "the evening sitting of," and inserting the words "a quarter-past eight on, instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY.

Standing Order No. 15 read.

And amended in paragraph (5), line 2, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

In line 3, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

In line 3 by leaving out the words "for the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule," and inserting the words "exempting business from interruption under the Standing Order (sittings of the house)."

In paragraph (6), line 3, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

And in paragraph (11), line 2, by leaving out the words "day of two sittings," and inserting the words "sitting on any other day," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COUNTING OUT.

Standing Order No. 25 read.

And amended in line 1, by leaving out the words "At an evening sitting."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In line 1, to leave out the word 'before,' and insert the words 'between half-past eight and.'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'before' stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. Forster 406
Mr. Laurence Hardy 407
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 407
Mr. Whitley 407
Mr. Akers-Douglas 408
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 408

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Standing Order further amended, in lines 1 and 2, by leaving out the words "before ten," and inserting the words "between a quarter-past eight and a quarter-past nine," instead thereof.

In line 2, by leaving out the words "at an evening sitting before ten," and inserting the words "between a quarter-past eight and a quarter-past nine," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Ordered, That the Amendments of the Standing Orders do not take effect until after the Easter Recess.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Ordered, That the Standing Orders, as amended, be printed.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL. [SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

The Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 409

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Edward Carson (Dublin University) 413
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 417
Mr. Healy (Louth, N.) 418
Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.) 418
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 419

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Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Marine Insurance Bill [LORDS].—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 421

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Edward Carson 422

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Prevention of Corruption Bill [LORDS].—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir William Robson 422

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Dickinson (*St. Pancras, N.*) 424

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Dickinson*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 425
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 425
Mr. Eugene Wason (*Clackmannan and Kinross*) 427
Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*) 427
Mr. T. Davies (*Fulham*) 428
Mr. Vivian (*Birkenhead*) 428
Mr. Nield (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 429
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 430

MR. SOLICITOR-GENERAL rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question," put accordingly, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

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EVENING SITTING.

Additional Electrical Power Supply (London) Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Pickersgill (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*) 432
Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) 435

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 436
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 438
Mr. Bertram (*Hertfordshire, Hitcham*) 440
Mr. W. H. Davies (*Bristol, S.*) 441
Mr. Barnard (*Kidderminster*) 442
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 443

Question put.

House divided :—Ayes, 51 ; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 44.)

Words added—

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN) ESTATES COMMISSION.

Mr. Butcher (*Cambridge University*) 447
Mr. Lonsdale (*Armagh, Mid.*) 452

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient, on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission, to facilitate the sale of their holdings to the occupying tenants."—(*Mr. Butcher*).

Mr. Hugh Law (*Donegal, W.*) 457
Mr. John O'Connor (*Kildare, N.*) 460

Amendment proposed—

"In line 1, to leave out the words 'on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission.'"—(*Mr. Law.*)

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir Edward Carson 461
The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange*) .. 462
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 464

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Carlisle Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered, to be read the third time. 465

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [LORDL].—Considered; to be read at the third time upon Friday 465

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 465

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petitions in favour, from Aberdeen; Brighouse; Crieff, and other places; Kincardineshire (two); Norwich; Southampton; Stirling; Swansea; and, Workington; to lie upon the Table 465

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petitions in favour, from Borrowstounness; and Carriden; to lie upon the Table 465

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petitions in favour, from Bethnal Green; Exmouth; Leicester; and, Wells; to lie upon the Table 465

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.—Petition from Shoreditch, in favour; to lie upon the Table 465

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of law, from Abbas; Ainsdale (two); Albury and Chilworth; Ancoats; Askham; Bryan (two); Aston; Audenshawe; Aynhoe; Balderstone; Barmston; Bethnal Green; Bilton cum Bickerton; Birch (two); Blackburn (two); Blackmoor; Boningate; Bowden; Bramshott (two); Brockmoor; Burgh Castle (two); Burnham Thorpe (two); Chapel Allerton (two); Charwelton; Cheltenham (two); Chorley (two); Cirencester (eight); Clun; Connah's Quay; Crayke; Darrington; Drewsteignton; Dumbleton; Dursley; East Worldham (two);

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays.—Petitions for prohibition, from Birmingham (three); Broughton in Furness; Crewkerne; Great Malvern; Handsworth (three); Leicester; Middleport (two); Ramsbottom; and West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table 466

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Monmouthshire).—Two petitions from Ramsbottom, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 467

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Hayes Urban District Council.—Return [Presented April 3rd] to be printed. [No. 109] 467

Education (Scotland) (General Reports).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 467

Public Elementary Schools (Scholarships, etc.).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 19th, 1905; Dr. Macnamara]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110] 467

Prices of Exported Coal.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 15th; Mr. David Thomas]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111] 468

Government Insurances and Annuities.—Account presented, of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities and for payments on death made, during the year 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112] 468

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SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated March 29th, 1906, declaring that Albert Brydges Tarn, assistant inspector or examiner of vaccine lymph, Privy Council Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 468

BOROUGHS (RATEABLE VALUE).—Return ordered, "as to the boroughs of Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, and West Ham, and the metropolitan borough of Holborn, showing the following particulars :—

Name of borough. 1.	Rateable value of the whole of the rateable hereditaments in the borough. 2.	Rateable hereditaments in the borough in respect of the occupation of which no persons are entered in the lists of electors of the borough councillors because the hereditaments are occupied by corporations or joint stock or other companies.	
		Rateable value of the hereditaments. 3.	Number of corporations and companies in occupation. 4.

—(*Mr. John Tennant.*)

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CONSTABLE ANDERSON, R.I.C.—Questions, Mr. Sloan and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 515

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TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT—COLONIAL OFFICE MORALITY.—Question, Captain Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) .. 522

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Gill; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Howard.

Report to lie on the Table 522

NEW BILLS.

Old Age Pensions (No. 3) Bill—"To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. J. W. Wilson; supported by Mr. Goddard, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 146] 522

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 523

Mr. William McArthur (*Cornwall, St. Austell*) 529

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House desires such recognition and guarantee of insurance as to prevent the defeat of legal expectation of compensation created under the Law'—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 533

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 536

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

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Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 542
Mr. Montgomery (Somersetshire, Bridgwater) 548
Mr. Walsh (Lancashire, Ince) 550
Mr. Raphael (Derbyshire, S.) 554
Sir Robert Ropner (Stockton) 556
Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Mid.) 561
Mr. Cory (Cornwall, St. Ives) 566
Mr. Gill (Bolton) 568
Mr. Gladstone 570
Mr. David MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale) 575

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

Dover Harbour Board Bill [Lords] (By Order).

Twickenham and Teddington Electric Supply Bill (By Order).—Read a second time and committed.

Contempt of Court in Ireland.

Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory) 579
Mr. Blake (Longford, N.) 584

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation."—(*Mr. Delany.*)

Dr. Shipman (Northampton) 594
Mr. Mooney (Newry) 596
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 598
Mr. Dodd (Tyrone, N.) 600
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (Fermanagh, N.) 603
The Solicitor-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) .. 605
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 610
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 611

Mr. John Redmond rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question proposed, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, That the jurisdiction of judges in dealing with contempt of court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation.

EDUCATION (UNITED KINGDOM).—Address for "Return for the year 1904–5, relating to the Education in the United Kingdom, in the following form :—

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

		England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of public elementary schools receiving grants from the Imperial Exchequer				
2. Total number of pupils on rolls				
3. Total number of pupils in average attendance... ...				
4. Number of principal teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
5. (a) Number of assistant certificated teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
(b) Number of assistant uncertificated teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
(c) Number of supplementary teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
(d) Number of pupil teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
6. Average number of pupils in average attendance per principal teacher ...	Men ...			
	Women ...			
7. Average salary of principal teacher ...	Men ...			
	Women ...			
8. Average salary for assistant certificated teachers	Men ...			
	Women ...			
9. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer				

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of schools receiving State grants ...			
2. Total number of registered pupils			
3. Number of pupils in proportion to population... ...			
4. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of schools and classes receiving State aid			
2. Total number of registered pupils			
3. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of universities			
2. Total number of professors			
3. Total number of matriculated students			
4. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

SUMMARY.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer for Primary, Secondary, Technical, and University education ...			
2. Proportion of (1) to total population			
3. Total sum raised from local rates for educational purposes			
4. Proportion of (3) to total population			
5. Total sum received from the local taxation account ...			
6. Proportion of (5) to total population			
7. Total cost to the Imperial Exchequer of central administration for Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education			
8. Proportion of (7) to (1)			
9. Total sum expended by local authorities on local administration of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education			

—(*Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.*)

Adjourned at six minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1906.

NEW PEERS.

Sir Edward Arthur Colebrook, Baronet, having been created Baron Colebrooke of Stebunheath, in the county of Middlesex, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Lord Glanusk sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Earl of Stanhope sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord de L'Isle and Dudley took the Oath 617

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Petition for Bill, ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill.

Read, and agreed to 617

CRELLIN'S PATENTS.—Petition of John Caesar Crellin, of the city of Liverpool, engineer (by George Pollard, his duly authorised attorney), praying for leave to introduce a Bill for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to John Caesar Crellin for inventions for (1) an appliance for raising, lowering, supporting, and transporting portions of machinery and the like; (2) improvements relating to lifting jacks; and (3) improved apparatus for

raising, lowering, supporting, and transporting portions of machinery and like uses; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 617

RITZ HOTEL, LIMITED.—Petition of the Ritz Hotel, Limited, under the common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill for enabling the Ritz Hotel, Limited, to re-arrange its capital, and to provide for the extinction of its deferred shares, and for issuing ordinary shares in lieu thereof, and for altering the memorandum and articles of association of the company, and for other purposes; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 617

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.].—Presented (purusant to leave given this day). Read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners .. 618

Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th of March and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 618

Mullingar Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L].—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection .. 618

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill—Millwall Dock Bill. Read 2ª, and committed 618

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 618

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill—Brought from the Commons 618

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 618

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—(No. 50.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts; and

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kesteven, etc.) Bill [H.L.].—(No. 51.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the councils of the administrative counties of the Parts of Kesteven, Surrey, and Warwick, and the municipal borough of Ealing, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

Were presented by the Lord President (*E. Crewe*), read 1ª; to be printed and referred to the Examiners 618

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills.—Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, also the time for depositing Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess .. 619

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Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—Read 1^a; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2^a (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell), and reported from the Committee. (No. 53.) 619

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 32, Northern Nigeria: First Reports on the results of the Mineral Survey of Northern Nigeria, 1904–1905 (No. 1 of Series) by Professor Wyndham Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Director of the Imperial Institute.

No. 33. Southern Nigeria: Reports on Mineral Survey for 1903–4 and 1904–1905, by Professor Wyndham Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Director of the Imperial Institute.

No. 34. Report on the Agricultural Industries of Montserrat, by Francis Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc., Superintendent of Agriculture in the Leeward Islands.

No. 35. Report on the Sugar Industry in Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis, 1881 to 1905, by Francis Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc., Superintendent of Culture in the Leeward Islands.

No. 36. West Indies, Report on the working of the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies 619

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3545. Turkey (Adrianople).
No. 3546. Honduras.
No. 3547. Morocco.
No. 3548. France (New Caledonia). 619

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—General Report by the chief inspector of the Western Division of Scotland, for the year 1905 620

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Return for the month of February, 1906.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 620

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 29th March, 1906, declaring that Albert Brydges Farn, Assistant Inspector or Examiner of Vaccine Lymph, Privy Council Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department 620

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.—Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27 and 28 Victoria, cap. 43, 45 and 46 Victoria, cap. 51, and 50 and 51 Victoria, cap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended December 31st, 1905 620

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND.)—Rule, dated March 20th, 1906, made by the Lord Chancellor in substitution of Rule No. 18 of the Summary Jurisdiction Rules 1886 620

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SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Order made by the council of the borough of Burton-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough .. 620

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).—Statutory Rules and Orders 1906, No. 231. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 13) Warrant 1906, dated March 22nd, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 620

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools.

Of teachers in schools at Rawtenstall—Chatburn—Manchester.

Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Rawtenstall—Manchester (2).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table. 621

NEW BILLS.

Bills of Exchange Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon, was presented by the Lord Avebury; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 45.] .. 621

Solicitors Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Solicitors Acts was presented by the Lord Alverstone; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 46.] 621

Matrimonial Causes Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.] (No. 47.).—A Bill to amend the Matrimonial Causes Acts, 1857 and 1866, by extending the powers of the Court in relation to maintenance and alimony, and leave to intervene, and to amend the Evidence Further Amendment Act, 1869: And 621

Extradition Bill [H.L.] (No. 48.).—A Bill to include bribery amongst extradition crimes, was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed 621

Sight Testing Opticians Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to regulate the practice of opticians as regards the testing of sight, was presented by the Lord Addington; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 49.] 621

Conveyancing Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Davey 621

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Davey.*)

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 622

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

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Married Women's Property Bill [H.L.].—(SECOND READING.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Davey 623

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Davey.*) .. .. ..

The Lord Chancellor 623

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and referred to the Select Committee.

Settled Land Bill [H.L].—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Davey 624

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and referred to the Select Committee.

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill. [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 625

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, line 10, after the second word 'for' to insert the words 'the sale of.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 2, after the word 'therefrom,' to insert as a new sub-section: (2) Before granting any licence under this section the local authority shall take into consideration whether in the neighbourhood where the applicant for the licence carries on or intends to carry on business the reasonable requirements of the public with respect to the purchase of such poisonous substances as aforesaid are satisfied."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 28, to leave out the word 'posted" and to insert the word 'exhibited.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

The Earl of Crewe 626

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 32, to leave out the words 'or use the description.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

The Earl of Crewe 627

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 33, after the word 'unless' to insert the words 'in every premises where the business is carried on.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Crewe 627

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 2, after the word 'company' to insert the words 'Provided that notwithstanding anything in this section a company may continue to use any description which it was accustomed to use before the first day of April one thousand nine hundred and six.'" —(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

Viscount St. Aldwyn 628
The Earl of Crewe 629

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 :—

The Earl of Crewe 629

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 5, page 3, line 7, after the word 'persons' to insert the words 'desirous of'; in line 9, after the word 'the' to insert the words 'council of the'; in line 10, after the word 'training' to insert the words 'in the subjects of the examination'; in line 16, after the word 'the' to insert the words 'council of the'; and in line 17, after the word 'registered' to insert, as a new paragraph: '(*c*) providing for

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periods of time and courses of study in connection with the qualifying examination and dividing such examination into two parts.' "—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7.

Lord Oranmore and Browne 630

Amendment moved—

" To leave out Clause 7, and to insert the following new clause ' This Act shall not apply to Ireland.' "—(*Lord Oranmore and Browne.*)

The Earl of Crewe 630

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8 agreed to.

Schedule.

The Earl of Crewe 631

Amendments moved—

" In page 5, line 4, after the word ' alkaloids,' to insert the words ' not specifically named in this Schedule ' ; in line 6, to leave out the words ' and its ' and to insert the words ' aconitine and their ' ; in line 7, after the word ' its ' to insert the words ' salts and their ' ; in line 13 to leave out the words ' its preparations ' and to insert the words ' preparations of ergots ' ; in line 19, to leave out the word ' preparations ' and to insert the words ' salts and vermin killers containing strychnine ' ; in line 21, at end to insert the words " Antimonial wine ' ; in line 22, at end to insert the words ' other than those included under atropine ' ; in line 28 to leave out the word ' poison ' and to insert the word ' poisonous ' ; in line 32, after the word ' chloroform ' to insert the words ' and liniment of chloroform ' ; in line 33, after the word ' cocaine ' to insert the words ' and its salts ' ; in line 36, after the word ' morphine ' to insert the words ' and its salts,' and at end to insert the words ' of morphine ' ; in line 38 to leave out the words ' and poppies ' and to insert the words ' poppies, all compositions prepared from,' ; and in page 6, line 6, at end to insert the words 'strychnine and its salts, preparations of.' "—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to, and Bill reported, with Amendments, to the House, and to be printed as Amended. (No. 52.)

Juvenile Smoking Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read, and discharged 632

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THE IMPORTATION OF LIVE CATTLE.

The Earl of Jersey 632
Lord Oranmore and Browne 636
Lord Burghclere 641
The Marquess of Winchester 645
Lord Lovat 646
Lord Desborough 648
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The Earl of Camperdown 655
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Lord Ellenborough 662
The Earl of Granard 668

THE ALIENS ACT.

The Earl of Camperdown 669
The Lord Chancellor (Lord Loreburn) 669
The Marquess of Lansdowne 670

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied, with, viz. :—Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 671

Watford Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.] 671

London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—Mr. Chance, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Mr. James Parker, Mr. Watson Rutherford, and Mr. Luke White were nominated Members of the Select Committee on the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 672

Provisional Order (Marriages) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under the Provisional Order (Marriages) Act, 1905," presented by Mr. Herbert Samuel; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 147.] 672

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Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill.—":To authorise the Corporation of Shrewsbury to construct additional Waterworks; and for other purposes." Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 672

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill.—New Mills Urban District Council Bill; Uxbridge Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments. Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 672

Wallis' Divorce Bill. [Lords].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Proceedings.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

Bill to be read the third time.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords], together with the Documents deposited in each case, be returned to the House of Lords; and that the Clerk do carry the same.—(*The Lord Advocate.*) 672

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to establish Limited Partnerships." [Limited Partnerships Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to revive and extend the powers for the purchase of land and the time limited for the completion of the railway authorised by the Wirral Railway Act, 1898; to extend the time for the sale of surplus lands of the Wirral Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to authorise agreements between the Manchester Ship Canal Company and the owners of or persons interested in the minerals under or adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal; and for other purposes." [Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords.] .. ..

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; **Bridgewater Canals Bill** [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 673

PETITIONS.

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petitions in favour: From Burnley; Devonport; Forfarshire; Gillingham; Glasgow; Ramsgate; St. Helens; and, West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table 673

Justices of the Peace Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 673

Land Value (Assessment and Rating Bill.)—Petition from Rosemarkie, in favour; to lie upon the Table 673

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from Chertsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table 674

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PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of law: From Abingdon; Ailsworth; Ashton-under-Lyne (two); Audlem; Batheaston; Birmingham; Blackburn (three); Blaisdon; Bolton; Bulford; Cantref; Castor; Chichester; Clifton; Crookbank; Croughton; Darwen (four); Deddington (two); Devonport; Dover (two); Eartham (two); East Chiltington (two); East Clevedon; East Harptree; Edlington (two); Edmonton; Ewood Bridge; Fallowfield and Ladybarn (two); Fatfield; Fawley (two); Funtington; Garstang (two); Gayton; Gerrard's Cross; Glodwick; Goosey; Great and Little Bourton (two); Ham (two); Hampstead; Hansworthy; Hanwell (two); Harome; High Wycombe; Hoath; Hoddlesden (two); Holton St. Mary; Hook Norton (two); Horncastle; Horwick; Kew; Keynsham (two); Kirby Misperton; Lamesley (two); Langley; Leire; Little Brickhill; Little Stanmore; Little Whittingham; Llanfihangel; Longridge (two); Mansel Lacy (two); Marcham (two); Medomsley; Mellor; Merthyr Cynog (two); Milton (two); Moulsoe (two); Musbury; Newbottle; Northampton; Norton (two); Nursling; Old Bewick; Oldham; Patching; Pattingham; Peel; Pelton; Perworth (two); Portishead; Poulshot; Quidgely; Rackham; Reculver; Richmond; Ryburgh (two); Ryde; St. Jude's, Southwark; St. Peter, Sowerby; Salford; Shenington (two); Silkstone; Silverstone; Sonning; Stainborough (two); Stanford in the Vale (two); Stowe Nine Churches; Taunton; Temple Ewell, Thorpe; Tickenham (three; Timsbury (two); Tudhoe (two); Up loadon; Upton (two); Walmersley (three); Walshaw; Wandsworth; Wark-on-Tyne; Weedon (two); Wellingore (two); Westmeston (two); Whittlebury; Winchester; Windlesham (two); Withybrook (two); Wittenham; and, Wootton; to lie upon the Table 675

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petitions for prohibition: From Bilston; Birmingham; Chorley; Crewkerne (two); and, Lumb in Rossendale; to lie upon the Table 675

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (MONMOUTHSHIRE).—Petition from Burnage, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 675

SALE OF WHISKY BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 675

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3545 to 3548 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 675

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (BOROUGH OF BURTON-UPON-TRENT)—Copy presented—of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Burton-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 675

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND)—Copy presented—of Rule dated March 20th 1906, made by the Lord Chancellor in substitution of Rule of No. 18 of the Summary Jurisdiction Rules, 1886 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 675

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Copy presented—of Return of Proceedings during the month of February, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 675

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Colonial Reports (Miscellaneous).—Copies represented—of Reports Nos. 32 (Northern Nigeria, First Report on the Results of the Mineral Survey of Northern Nigeria, 1904–5, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.), 33 (Southern Nigeria, Reports on Mineral Survey for 1903–4 and 1904–5, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.), 34 (Montserrat, Report on the Agricultural Industries, by Mr. F. Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc.), 35 (Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis, Report on Sugar Industry, by Mr. F. Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc.), 36 (West Indies, Reports on the Working of the Imperial Department of Agriculture) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 676

Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 and 1902.—Account presented—showing the Money issued from the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of the Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), and 1902 (2 Edw. 7, c. 40), and of the Money expended and borrowed, and Securities created under the said Acts, to 31st March, 1905, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113] 676

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Tramways and Light Railways (Street and Road).—Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways and Light Railways authorised by Act or Order, showing the amount of capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of line authorised, and the length open for public traffic down to December 31st, 1905, in respect of companies, and March 31st, 1906, in respect of local authorities; the gross receipts, working expenditure, net receipts, and appropriation of net receipts; the number of passengers conveyed, the number of miles run by cars, and the quantity of electrical energy used during the year ended on the foregoing dates respectively; together with the number of horses, engines, and cars at those dates (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 322, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*) 676

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IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF MOTOR CARS FROM AND INTO FRANCE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.—Question, Mr. Fell; Answer, Mr. Kearley 738

REGISTER OF TEACHERS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Birrell (Bristol, N.) 739

THE TURNER BEQUEST.—Questions, Mr. Fullerton and Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answers, Mr. McKenna 739

April 5.] Page

Aged Pensioners (No. 2) Bill.—" To provide Pensions for the Aged deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts ; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 152.] 754

Post Office Sites Bill.—" To enable His Majesty's Postmaster-General to acquire lands in London, Birmingham, Blackburn, Bromley, Torquay, Carnforth, and Walton-on-Thames for the public service ; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 153.] 754

SUPPLY [5TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES 1906–7.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £29,050, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a Grant-in-Aid of certain Expenses connected with emigration."

Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 755
Mr. A. E. W. Mason (*Coventry*) 768
Lord Helmsley (*Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 774
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (*Wiltshire, Chippenham*) 777
Mr. Burdett-Coutts (*Westminster*) 783
Mr. Paul (*Northampton*) 789
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 792
Mr. Belloc (*Salford, S.*) 797
Mr. Ashley (*Lancashire, Blackpool*) 799
Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 802
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 805
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 809
Lord Morpeth (*Birmingham, S.*) 813

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

North West London Railway Bill [BY ORDER].—Read a second time, and committed.

SUPPLY [5TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1906–7.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,050, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a Grant in Aid of certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

Lord Morpeth	814
Mr. Markham (*Notts, Mansfield*)	819
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*)	826
The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.*)	834
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*)	848

Whereupon Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again"—(*Mr. Morton*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 6th APRIL, 1906.

Took the Oath.

The Lord Rosmead took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Shrewsbury Corporation Water.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 853

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company Bill [H.L.]; Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Earl of Wicklow and the Lord Teynham be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Faber and the Lord Joicey; read, and agreed to 853

April 6.] Page

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 853

Watford Gas Bill.—Huddersfield Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 853

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in the case, returned from the Commons 853

PETITION.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools—

Of parents and guardians of children attending school at Blackrod; Pendleton and Mearly; Worsthorne St. Johns; Newchurch-in-Pendle; Fence; Lanehead; Eccles; Lancaster (4); Bury (3); Kirkham (2); Kenwortham; Bircle; St. Anne's-on-Sea; Walmersley; Bolton; Marton; Little Marton;

Of teachers in schools at Fence; Burnley; Pendleton and Mearley; Blackrod; Lanehead; Lancaster (4); St. Anne's-on-Sea; Kirkham (2); Edenfield; Marton; Bury (3).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 853

The Colonial Marriages Bill.

Lord James of Hereford 854
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 854

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE.

Lord Monkswell 854

Moved, for Papers.—(*Lord Monkswell.*) 862

Lord Newton 862
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 867
Earl Cawdor 873

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Wireless Telegraphy Bill [SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of Granard 875

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday, the 30th inst.

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THE ALGECIRAS CONFERENCE.

Earl Cawdor 876
Lord Fitzmaurice 876

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Monday, the 30th instant, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred to the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and whch are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 878

Huddersfield Corporation Bill.—Read the third time and passed. Bacup Corporation Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 879

Todmorden Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 879

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed 879

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Bath, Cheshunt, Hove (two), Nantwich, Oystermouth and Tamworth (Rural)," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 154.] 879

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Ashton-in-Makerfield, Cardigan, Darlington, Hoylake and West Kirby, Plymouth, Salford, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Totnes, and Tydlesley-with-Shakerly," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 155.] 879

London Government Schemes (London and Penge, &c.) Bill.—"To confirm certain Schemes made under the London Government Act, 1899, relating to the county of London and Penge, the county of London and Hornsey, the county of London and Barnes, and the counties of London and Kent," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 156.] .. 879

April 6.] *Page*

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for extending the period limited by the Knot End Railway Act, 1898, for the construction and completion of the railway by that Act authorised; and for other purposes." [Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to construct additional dock and other works; and for other purposes." [Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords] .. 880

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Mersy Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 880

PETITIONS.

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petitions in favour; From Aberdeenshire; Birkenhead; Bristol; Chester; Kirkcaldy and other places; Leith; Manchester and Salford; Salford; and, Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, Limited; to lie upon the Table 880

Licensing Acts.—Petition from Oldham, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 880

Liquor Traffic Local Veto.—Petition from Broughton in Furness, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 880

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petitions in favour; From Abercromby; Altrincham; Birmingham (two); Ealing; Fabian Society; Feltham; Mile End (five); North West London; St. Pancras; South Paddington (two); Strand; West London (two); West of Scotland Women's Liberal Association; and, Women's Liberal Unionist Association; to lie upon the Table 880

Local Taxation.—Petition from Whitehaven, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 880

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law; From Abbotts Ann; Alkborough; Ambergate; Anmer; Ashton-under-Lyne (two); Astwood; Bagendon; Bainton (two); Barking; Barton Stacey; Bath; Bedstone; Beswick; Beverston; Blackley (two); Blaxhall; Blunsden St. Leonard; Bolton; Botley (two); Bovinger; Braceborough (two); Bradshaw; Brent Knoll; Brockdish; Broome; Broughton cum Borrington; Broughton in Furness; Bury St. Chads; Bury St. Peter's; Calne; Cardiff; Carnforth (two); Chailey; Cheltenham; Cherry Willingham; Clapham; Claverton; Clevedon; Copley; Croxton; Darwen (three); Derby; Duston; Easton; Ebrington; Eccles (three); Elford; Eltham; Faccombe; Finchingfield; Fisherton Delamere; Formby; Fritton; Glasbury (two); Gosbeck (two); Grantchester (two); Great Ilford (two); Halifax; Harlaxton; Haselbeech; Headbourne; Heapy; Heywood; Hinton Parva (two); Hinton St. George; Holbrook; Hopton; Horstead; Hurst Green; Ilketshall St. Margaret (two); Kemerton (two); Ken (two); Langley Burrell (two); Lawhitton (two); Lechlade; Littleton (two); Llanfihangel Helgen; Llanwyre (two); Lower Swell; Lytham; Manton (two); Marchington (two); Merriot (two); Millbrook; Millend; Milnsbridge (four); Monton; More (two); Myddfai (two); Nailsea; Newendon (two); New

Malden; Newnham (two); Newton Flotman; Newton Linford; Norbury; Northampton (two); Norwich; Nunney (two); Odiham (two); Oswaldtwistle; Otterbourne; Ottringham; Overstone; Penton Mewsey; Pickering; Pitsford; Playford (two); Preston (two); Quarley; Reading; Redhill (two); Rendlesham; Ribchester; Roecliffe (two); Rotherfield Greys (two); Ryther with Ozebdike (two); St. Gabriel's Manchester (two); St. Judy (two); St. Simons, Salford (two); Satterthwaite; Scotby; Seer Green; Shiplake; Smallburgh; Stowlangtoft; Strumpshaw; Theale (two); Thornton Hough; Thruxton; Trimdon (two); Turweston; Upper Chelsea; Waddington; Wallsend; Wells; Wentworth; West Lydford; Westminster; Wickham; Wootton; Worsley (two); and York; to lie upon the Table 881

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Ashton, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 882

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATAL (EXECUTION OF NATIVES).—Copy presented of Petition to the Privy Council of the twelve Natives recently executed in Natal, and the Affidavit in support of the Petition, and the Judgment [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 882

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Denmark, dated the 26th December, 1905, 23rd January, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 882

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROMOTION OF SUB-POSTMASTERS TO HEAD-POSTMASTERSHIPS.—Question, Mr. Ellis-Griffith (Anglesey); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 882

SALES OF IRISH ESTATES.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 883

CONTRACT FOR CONVEYANCE OF MAILS FROM GWEEDORE TO BUNBEG.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 883

TELEGRAPH STAFF OF THE POST OFFICE—ADDITIONAL INCREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL ABILITY.—Question, Mr. Straus (Tower Hamlets, Mile End); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 884

VACANCY FOR AN ESTABLISHED POSTMAN AT CHELTENHAM.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 885

POST OFFICE—SUGGESTED ABOLITION OF THE IRISH SCALE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor ?—Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 885

FREE MEDICAL ATTENDANCE FOR BANGOR POSTAL OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 885

EX-TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS PERFORMING POSTMEN'S DUTY AT MANCHESTER.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 885

INSPECTOR'S REPORT IN THE "SCHOOLMISTRESS."—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 885

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REPAYMENT OF INCOME TAX TO FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.—Question, Mr. Tillett (Norwich); Answer, Mr. Asquith 886

IRISH LAND PURCHASE.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork Co., N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 886

IRRECOVERABLE RATES IN COUNTY LIMERICK—FORM OF DECLARATION.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 887

SALE OF THE MOUNT SHANNON ESTATE, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy ?—Answer, Mr. Bryce 887

INSPECTORS UNDER THE IRISH LAND ACT.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Bryce 888

SALARIES OF IRISH MEDICAL OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Bryce 888

QUARTERLY PAYMENT OF ARMY PENSIONERS.—Question, Captain Faber (Hants., Andover); Answer, Mr. Haldane 889

Post Office Sites Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Post Office Sites Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) .. 889

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill. [SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Cairns (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 889
Mr. Robert Price (*Norfolk, E.*) 898

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 903
Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 910

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add to the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. H. Greenwood (*York*) 917
Mr. William O'Brien (*Cork*) 922
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 928
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin Co., S.*) 932
Mr. Crombie (*Kincardineshire*) 941
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 943
Mr. Howard (*Cumberland, Eskdale*) 950
Mr. George Faber (*York*) 950

Mr. CAIRNS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

RAILWAYS.—Bill to amend the Regulation of Railway Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Stopford Brooke, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Gooch, and Mr. Rowlands.

Railways Bill.—"To amend the Regulation of Railway Acts," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 157.] 952

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 9TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [Lords]; Mersey Railway Bill (Lords); Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 953

Carlisle Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 953

Wallis' Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 953

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 953

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Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]; Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 953

Standing Orders.—Standing Order 207 was read and amended, in line 5, by leaving out the words "to be taken at the beginning of an Evening Sitting," and inserting the words "by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means," instead thereof.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*) 954

Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 954

Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time 954

PETITIONS.

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Blackburn; Kingston-upon-Hull; Perth; Perthshire; Rotherham; and Wrexham; to lie upon the Table 954

Land Values (Assessment and Rating Bill).—Petition from Stoke-upon-Trent, in favour; to lie upon the Table 954

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petitions in favour from Cardiff; Clapham; Hammersmith; Maldon; and National British Women's Temperance Association; to lie upon the Table 954

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law: from Alverthorpe; Alvington; Anbourne; Appleby; Ashburton; Ashton-on-Ribble; Barnstaple (two); Barrow (two); Barrowford (three); Batley; Beckenham (six); Birkenhead (four); Blackburn (two); Blackrod (two); Boston; Bramshaw; Bromley (four); Bromley Common (two); Burnley (two); Burnley St. Andrew's (two); Burnsall; Bury (two); Bury St. Stephen's (two); Canterbury (nine); Chatham; Chelsea; Chelsfield; Chevening (two); Chipping Sodbury (two); Cockermouth (two); Codnor; Colva; Conisholme; Consett (two); Cranbrook (two); Cranham; Dallington; Davidstowe; Deane (two); Denton; Derby; Dodworth; Durham; East and West Barkwith (two); East Woodhay; Eastoft; Eckington (two); Edenfield; Epworth; Eyam; Farnborough (two); Farnworth; Fawley; Freckenham; Freston; Fritwell (two); Gillingham (two); Great Warley; Griffithstown (two); Harrowden Magna cum Harrowden Parva (two); Hayes; Hessett (two); Hill (two); Hopton (two); Horsmonden; Ide Hill; Ipswich (two); Isham; Kingsthorpe (two); Knockholt (two); Langton by Wragby; Lanteglos by Camelford; Lanteglos and St. Adwen; Leckhampton; Leesfield; Littleham cum Exmouth; Llanfynydd (two); Llanwenarth Ultra; Lyndhurst (two); Manchester (twenty-one); Marchwood; Medowsley; Melton; Midhurst; Milford-on-Sea (two); Minstead (two); Monmouth (three); Musbury and Ewood Bridge; Neatishead; Nelson (two); Newchurch (two); Northampton (three); North Cockerington; Olveston and Elberton; Openshaw; Orford (two); Orton Longueville; Otterton; Padiham; Pauntley (two); Pemberton; Pendlebury St. John's (two); Plaisto ; Preston; Preston near Ledbury (two); Ravenstone (two); Rawtenstall (two); Rodington; Roehampton (two); Rhulen; Rushford; St. Enoder; St. Mabyn; St. Mary's in the Marsh; Salcott; Samlesbury (two); Sebargham; Sevenoaks (two); Sotby (two); South Somercotes; Stalybridge (three); Stamford; Stock and Buttsbury; Stratton; Sudbourne (two); Swansea; Swinton, Tynemouth; Underriver (four); Wakefield; Warmfield (three); Weeke (two); Wellingborough; Westborough cum Dry Doddington; Westbury (two); Westgate; Westleigh St. Peter's (two); Wensley Fold; Whelnetham; Wilmington; Winmarleigh; Woolsthorpe; and Wyke (four); to lie upon the Table 954

Tuberculosis (Animas) Prevention and Compensation Bill.—Petition from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, against; to lie upon the Table 955

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).—Return [presented March 28th] to be printed. [No. 115.] 956

MINES AND QUARRIES.—Copy presented, of General Report and Statistics for the year 1904, Part IV., Colonial and Foreign Statistics; Statistics relating to Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 956

MINES AND QUARRIES.—Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 956

PRISONERS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (TREATMENT OF SELECTED MALE CRIMINAL PRISONERS.—Copy presented, of Draft of Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, appropriating Borstal Prison and part of Lincoln Prison to Selected Male Criminal Prisoners, and providing as to the Treatment of selected Male Criminal Prisoners between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one under Special Rules [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 956

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY.—Copy presented, of Report of the Astronomer to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 956

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th March; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.] 956

PENNY POSTAGE.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd April; *Mr. Henniker Heaton*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.] .. 956

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report on the Banking, Railway, and Shipping Statistics of Ireland (for the year ended 31st December, 1905) by Command]; to lie upon the Table 957

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3549 to 3551 [by Command]; to pon the Table 957

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TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 646 and 647 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 957

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an Exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Royal Imperial Austrian Postal Administration, dated the 28th October, 10th November, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 957

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Public Records (Prison Commission). Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act] 957

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EXPENSES OF SEAMEN INVALIDED HOME.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 957

DANGERS OF TAKING DIACHYLON.—Question, Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 958

EXPENDITURE UNDER MARINE WORKS (IRELAND ACT).—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 959

WEI-HAI-WEI—UNEXPENDED BALANCE.—Question, Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington); Answer, Mr. Haldane 960

ARMY POLICY.—Question, Colonel Herbert (Monmouthshire, S.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 961

SOLDIERS AND POLICE AND THE GAELIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION.—Question, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 961

CRIME IN THE 16TH LANCERS.—Question, Mr. Lea (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 962

ARMY MEAT CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston); Answer, Mr. Haldane 962

SUGGESTED WEEKLY PAYMENT OF ARMY PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Beck (Cambridge, Wisbech); Answer, Mr. Haldane 962

THE NATAL GARRISON.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 963

CANADIAN IMPORT DUTY ON MALT FLOUR.—Question, Mr. Whitbread (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon); Answer, Mr. Churchill 963

LAND RESERVED FOR NATIVES IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Churchill 964

REPORT OF INTER-COLONIAL CUSTOMS CONFERENCE AT PIETERMARITZBURG.—Question, Mr. Wedgwood Benn (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Churchill 964

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MARTIAL LAW IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Paul (Northampton); Answer, Mr. Churchill 965

LABOURERS IN PORTUGUESE, EAST AFRICA.—Question, Sir C. Hill (Shrewsbury); Answer, Mr. Churchill 965

IRISH LAND ACT—EXPENSES INCURRED THROUGH TREASURY INTERVENTION. —Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 965

PUBLICATION OF THE MSS. OF THE CHARTULARY OF ST. THOMAS' ABBEY, DUBLIN.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 966

TENURE OF OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL.—Question, Mr. Paul; Answer, Mr. McKenna 967

BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, BOLTON.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 967

REPORT OF THE MANSFIELD COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 968

CONDITION OF THIRD-CLASS CARRIAGES ON THE LOUGHREA AND ATTYMON RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, N.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 968

SALE OF WARSHIPS AT CHATHAM.—Question, Mr. Stephen Collings (Lambeth, Kennington); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 969

VIVISECTION.—Question, Mr. Tomkinson (Cheshire, Crewe); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 969

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CROWN RENTS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1011

CROWENSTOWN PILLAR POST.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1012

MOUNTJOY PREMISES.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1012

NORTH SEAS FISHERY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1013

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1013

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NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Weetman Harold Miller Pearson, esquire, for the County of Suffolk (North Eastern or Eye Division) 1016

NEW BILLS.

Petroleum (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Petroleum Acts, 1871 and 1879," presented by Mr. J. W. Benn; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Bowerman, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 158.] 1016

Trust Accounts Audit Bill.—"To provide for the Audit of the Capital Accounts of certain Trusts," presented by Mr. Eugene Wason; supported by Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Fenwick, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Radford, and Sir James Woodhouse; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 159.] 1017

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) .. 1017

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to Education in England and Wales."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Sir William Anson (Oxford University) 1041
Mr. Masterman (West Ham, N.) 1046
Mr. J. R. Macdonald (Leicester) 1051
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1057
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 1065
Mr. Walters (Sheffield, Brightside) 1071
Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) 1074
Sir Alfred Thomas (Glamorganshire, E.) 1077
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton) 1078

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Middlesex County Council (General Powers) Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."

Mr. Carlile (*Hertfordshire, St. Albans*) 1078
Mr. Barnard (*Kidderminster*) 1079

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Carlile.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Nield (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 1080
Mr. Abel Smith (*Hertfordshire, Hertford*) 1081
The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. John Burns, Battersea*) 1083
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 1083

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [9th April], "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to education in England and Wales."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Question again proposed.

Sir John Kennaway 1084
Mr. Compton Rickett (*Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross*) 1085
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1089
Sir W. J. Collins (*St. Pancras, W.*) 1094
Sir Philip Magnus (*London University*) 1097
Mr. George White (*Norfolk, N.W.*) 1103
Mr. Birrell 1109

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Lough.

Education (England and Wales) Bill.—"To make further provision with respect to Education in England and Wales," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, April 24th, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

Post Office (Money Order) Bill.—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Chairman do report Progress ; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. L. Corbett.*)

The Postmaster-General (*Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) .. 1113

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 30 ; Noes, 210. (Division List No. 45.)

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).—Standing Order No. 47 read as followeth—Two Standing Committees shall be appointed for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, and to trade shipping, and manufactures, which may by order of the House in each case, be committed to them ; and the procedure in such Committees shall be the same as in the Select Committee, unless the House shall otherwise order ; provided that strangers shall be admitted, except when the Committee shall order them to withdraw ; and the said Committees shall not sit after a quarter past two of the clock whilst the House is sitting, without the order of the House ; provided also that any notice of Amendment to any clause in a Bill which may be committed to a Standing Committee, given by any hon. Member of the House, shall stand referred to such Committee ; provided also that twenty be the quorum of such Standing Committees.

And amended in line 7, by leaving out the words " a quarter past two," and inserting the word " three," instead thereof.—(*Sir H.Campbell-Bannerman.*) 1115

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY, 10TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.—Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received from the Judges appointed to try the several Election Petitions a Report relating to the Election for the County of Westmoreland (Northern Division). In the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division 1117

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 118

Bacup Corporation Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed 1118

Great Eastern Railway Bill (King's Consent Signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed 1118

Todmorden Corporation Bill—Read the third time, and passed 1118

Thornton Urban District Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1118

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords]; Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1118

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No 1) Bill—" To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Waterford," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161] 1118

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2 Bill.—" To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abercarn, Barry (Amendment), Bettwsycoed, Blaydon (Amendment), Calverley (Amendment), Farsley, Foots Cray (Amendment), Horsforth (Amendment), Market Harborough, and Wembley," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 162] 1119

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill.—" To confirm a Provisional Order under the Land Drainage Act, 1861, relating to lands in the parishes of Belton and West Butterwick, in the county of Lincoln (parts of Lindsey)," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 163] 1119

Standing Orders.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. " That, in the case of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. " That, in the case of the Edinburgh Corporation (substituted Bill), Petition for dispensing with Standing Orders in the case of the Petition of the Testamentary Trustees of the late Sir George Warrander, Sir James Miller, and the Governors of the Fettes Trust, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Sutton District Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

Resolutions agreed to 1119

PETITIONS.

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Two Petitions from Norfolk, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1120

Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Leith, against; to lie upon the Table 1120

Juvenile Smoking Bill.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1120

Licensing (Scotland) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Laurencekirk, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1120

Liquor Traffic Local Veto.—Two Petitions from Glasgow, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1120

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Laurencekirk, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1120

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from Hipperholme and Lightcliffe, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1120

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law, from Adlington; Alverstoke (two); Alwinton (two); Amport (two); Arborfield; Arkholme (two); Ashington; Ashley; Ashmanhaugh; Baldersby; Barkham; Basingstoke (two); Batley Carr; Battle; Bowdeswell; Beddingham (two); Beech Hill (two); Beedon (two); Bexley Heath (two); Birkenshaw; Birnwood; Blackburn (four); Bolton (two); Borley; Bournemouth; Braydestone; Bredon's Norton (two); Bridgewater (two); Bromley (two); Buckland; Burneston; Burnley; Bury (two); Bury St. Edmunds; Buscot; Calderbrook; Camborne; Cannington (two); Carmarthen; Chapel Allerton; Chebsey; Chiddingstone Causeway; Chippenham; Chitterne (two); Chobham (two); Chorlton cum Hardy; Cobham (two); Cockerham (two); Colden Common (two); Coppall (three); Corbridge (two); Corfe; Cotes Heath; Crayford (four); Crosscrake; Culford; Curry Mallet; Darenth (two); Dearnley (two); Denham; Derby (two); Dender (two); Ditchling (two); Dolphinholme; East Crompton; East Drayton; East Lockinge (two); East Stonehouse; Eastville with Medville; Eden Bridge (two); Edmonton; Egginton; Eglinham; Elland (two); Elson and Crofton; Elton; Erith (two); Evercreech; Ewell (two); Exeter; Ford; Forden; Friern Barnet; Frinton (two); Frodsham; Furnham; Gawber (two); Gawcott (two); Gildersome (two); Glascoed; Glascombe; Glooston; Goff's Oak; Goosnargh; Goosnargh with Whittingham; Great Braxted; Great Marton (two); Great Paxton (two); Great Stanmore; Greenham; Greenhithe (two); Greenton; Grimsby; Grindon; Groombridge (two); Gwehelog; Habergham Eaves, Burnley (two); Hadlow Down; Halstead; Hambleden (two); Hanney; Hardingham (two); Hardington; Harpurhey (three); Hawnby; Headley; Healhaugh (two); Heaton Norris (two); Hedingham; Henstead; Hever (two); Higher Bebington; High Hoyland (three); Hildenborough (two); Hollington and Rodsley (two); Holme on Spalding Moor; Honing; Horbury; Horbury Bridge; Horningsham; Hulme (three); Hulme St. Philip's; Hungerford (two); Hunsworth; Hunton (two); Iffley (two); Ingham; Ingham and Timworth; Ireborough and Withiel Florey; Ivington (two); Kingsdown (two); Kinson; Kinwarton; Kirk Langley; Kirklington; Knutsford; Lache cum Saltney; Lancaster; Langleybury (two); Layer Marney (two); Leeds; Lesbury; Leatherhead; Leyland; Little Bolton; Littleborough; Little Minto; Llananno; Llanbadarnfynydd; Llanelly; Llanfairarybryn; Llanfrynach; Llanganten (two); Llantrithyd; Lock's Heath; Longcot (two); Long Newton; Luddenden (three); Manchester (two); Manfield (two); Mariansleigh; Marley Hill (two); Marthall; Marton (two); Meifod (two); Melling with Wrayton; Mesham; Mickleham (two); Miles Platting; Mowsley; Mytholmroyd (two); Neasden; Netherfield (two); Nether Knutsford; Nettlestead (two); Newington; Newton Heath (three); Normanton on Trent (two); North Cray; Oakworth (two); Old Newton; Old Windsor; Ordsall in Salford; Orpington (two); Over; Overton; Pangbourne; Pembroke (two); Pendlebury (two); Pendleton (two); Penn Street; Penshurst (two); Purley; Queen Camel; Radcliffe; Ranworth; Ravenhead, St. Helens; Ringsfield (three); Ripley (two); Riverhead (two); Rostherne; Rowner; Rusdmere; Rusthall (two); Ryeworth; St. Chad; St. Giles in the Fields; St. Lawrence (two); Salford (four); Saltney; Sandhoe Beaufront; Sarisbury; Sawbridgeworth; Scarborough; Seal (two); Shipbourne (two); Shoreham (two); Sloley (three); Snetterton; Southborough (two); South Charlton; Southfleet; Southwell (two); Sowerby Bridge; Speenhamland (two); Speldhurst (two); Stalybridge, Stanningley; Stepney; Stockland; Stockport (two); Stourton Cundle; Stow Maries; Sulham (two); Sunderland (two); Sutton at Home (two); Swanscombe; Swinton (two); Taf-fechan; Taunton; Tavistock; Tettenhall (two); Thames Ditton; Thatcham (two); Toddington; Tonbridge (two); Tonge; Trull; Tunbridge Wells (eight); Turnditch; Tynemouth; Ufton (two); Ulverston (two); Usk; Warrington; Warton; Wasing; West Gorton; Westhall; West Thorney; Weybridge; Wilmington; Winlaton; Wiston; Withington (three); Woodbartwich; Woolavington; Woolhampton; Woolston; Wynyard; Yarmouth (two); and, Yazor (two); to lie upon the Table 1120

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Paper [presented 9th April] to be printed. [No. 118] 1122

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; Viscount Castlereagh]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119] 1122

FIRE BRIGADES AND FIRES, 1903.—Copy presented, of Return relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1122

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the City and County of Bristol and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' and Hairdressers' Shops within the City and County [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1123

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.—Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended December 31st, 1905, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical

List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.) in which accounts were opened in the Books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120] 1123

EAST INDIA (TRADE).—Copy presented, of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1900–1901 to 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1123

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Statement of Moneys expended by Local Education Authorities under Part I. and Part II. of the Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1123

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).—Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Austria-Hungary, as modified by Commercial Treaties with Germany, Russia, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1123

COAL EXPORTED.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; Mr. D. A. Thomas]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.] .. 1123

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

HOURS OF DUTY OF SCOTTISH PRISON WARDERS.—Question, Mr. Mitchell Thompson (Lanarkshire, N.W.); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1124

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—SALES OF IRISH ESTATES.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1124

IRISH REPRESENTATION ON CANAL COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1127

COST OF POLICE FORCE IN THE RATHMINES AND RATHGAR DISTRICT.—Question, Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1128

POSTAL ASSOCIATION—PROTECTION OF OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. J. Haslam (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1129

TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE POST OF OFFENSIVE POST CARDS.—Question, Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland, Tyneside); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1129

DELAY IN COMPLETION OF KING'S ROAD (CHELSEA) POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Horniman (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1130

RUSSIAN RETALIATORY IMPORT DUTIES.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1130

DETENTION BY THE ITALIAN COURTS OF STEAMER "BRIARDALE."—Question, Mr. Cairns (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1131

POPULAR TELEPHONE RATES.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1132

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DRUMLISH POSTAL DELIVERIES.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1132

ANNUAL LEAVE OF ADULT POST-OFFICE NIGHT MESSENGERS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1133

REPORT OF BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1133

PERSONS CHARGEABLE ON THE RATES—COST OF PREPARING STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. John Burns.. 1134

SCOTTISH DEER FORESTS.—Question, Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1135

OVERCROWDING IN GLASGOW AND DUNDEE.—Question, Mr. J. D. White; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1135

INFANT MORTALITY IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. J. D. White; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1135

SCOTTISH CIVIL SERVANTS WITH SALARIES EXCEEDING £149.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1136

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Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 122.]

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 164] 1191

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1191

ELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Colonel Williams; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Lane-Fox.

Report to lie upon the Table 1191

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [Lords]. — Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 165] 1191

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, April 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 166] 1191

Limited Partnerships Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, April 24th, and to be printed. [Bill 167] .. 1192

NEW BILLS.

Vivisection (Abolition) Bill.—"To provide for the total Abolition of Vivisection," presented by Mr. John Johnson; supported by Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. John Wilson, Colonel Sandys, Colonel Lockwood. Mr. Cremer, Mr. Moss, Mr. Bell, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Lupton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, April 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 168] 1192

Limited Partnerships Bill.—"To establish Limited Partnerships," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Blake, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Parkes, and Mr. Rose; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 169.] 1192

Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Bill.—"To consolidate the Enactments relating to Agricultural Holdings in Scotland," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 170] 1192

Agricultural Holdings (No. 2) Bill.—"To consolidate the Enactments relating to Agricultural Holdings in England," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 171] 1192

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [4th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 1192
Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) 1195
Mr. A. Williamson (*Elgin and Nairn*) 1197
Mr. Lawrence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 1202
Mr. Clynes (*Manchester, N.E.*) 1203
Mr. Samuel Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 1205
Mr. Harwood-Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 1206
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorks., Cleveland*) 1211

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a scond time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

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Sir A. Acland Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington* 1217
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1217
Sir Francis Lowe (*Birmingham, Edgbaston*) 1218
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 1218
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 1218

Question put and agreed to.

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; read the third time, and passed 1219

Open Spaces Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc. 1219

Naval Prize Bill [Lords].—Read a second time and committed for Tuesday, April 24th 1219

Dean Forest Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (*Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.*) 1219

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented four clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel, or agents be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered That three be the quorum.—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Crown Lands Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Pickersgill (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*) 1220

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'No Bill dealing with the transfer of the

management of certain Crown lands from the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to another department will be satisfactory to this House unless it provides for the transfer of the control and management of the agricultural portion of those lands to the Board of Agriculture.' "—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. McKenna 1223
Mr. Victor Cavendish (*Derbyshire, W.*) 1225
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 1225
Mr. Rowlands (*Kent, Dartford*) 1225
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 1227

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented four clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee ; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum.—(*Mr. McKenna*).

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th March], " That the Bill be now read a second time,"

Question again proposed.

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 1229
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 1230
Mr. W. H. Lever (*Cheshire, Wirral*) 1231
Mr. W. Pearce (*Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*) 1232
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 1232

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

And, there being no further business set down for the Afternoon Sitting Mr. Speaker left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

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EVENING SITTING.

LOCAL OPTION.

Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmoreland, Appleby*) 1233
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1239

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House notes with satisfaction the successful working of the Local Option Laws in the Colonies, and approves the principle on which these laws are based—namely, that the people ought to possess the power through a vote of the local electors to protect themselves against the admitted evils of the liquor traffic."—(*Mr. Leif Jones*).

Mr. Harwood (*Botlon*) 1243
Mr. John O'Connor (*Kildare, N.*) 1246
Mr. Whittaker (*Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*) 1248
Mr. Cave (*Surrey, Kingston*).. 1252
Mr. Cameron Corbett (*Glasgow, Tradeston*) 1256
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (*Lanarkshire, N.W.*) 1258
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 1260
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 1262
Mr. W. H. Lever (*Cheshire, Wirrall*) 1264
Mr. Fell (*Great Yarmouth*) 1264

Mr. LEIF JONES rose in his place and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question, " That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The House divided :—Ayes, 271 ; Noes, 44. (Division List No. 46).

Resolved, That this House notes with satisfaction the successful working of the Local Option Laws in the Colonies, and approves the principle on which these laws are based, namely, that the people ought to possess the power, through a vote of the local electors, to protect themselves against the admitted evils of the liquor traffic.

Adjourned at Seventeen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 11TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 1269

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.—Ordered, That the Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against

Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*) 1269

Dover Harbour Board Bill [LORDS].—Reported without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time 1269

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Blackheath Staffordshire); and Rowley Regis; to lie upon the Table 1269

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Wigan, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1269

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.—Petition from Cathays, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1269

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from East Finsbury; and London; to lie upon the Table 1269

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; Aller (two); Alton Barnes and Alton Priors (two); Aveley; Appleton; Ardwick; Astley; Aston by Stone; Bedale (two); Beer Crocombe (two); Bethnal Green (two); Bilsdale Midcable; Blackburn (three); Blockley (two); Boconnoc; Bonchurch (two); Braddock; Bradford; Brightling; Broadhempston (two); Buckingham; Burnham Deepdale; Carleton Rode (two); Carlton le Moorland; Carmarthen; Chaddleworth; Chelsea; Claydon cum Akenham; Cold Kirby; Compton Martin (two); Cricklade; Cropredy; Croydon; Darlington (two); Darwen (three); Dickleburgh (two); Doddington (two); Ealing; East Ardsley (two); Eastmoors; Edmonton (two); Eridge Green; Farncombe; Filby (three); Finghall; Flordon; Frenchay; Fulmodeston (two); Gatcombe (two); Great and Little Henny (two); Great and Little Kimble (two); Great Glemham; Great Grimsby; Great Missenden (two); Grimston; Hadlow Down; Halliwell; Hanworth; Hapton (two); Heigham; Helmsley; Hereford (two); Highbury; High Ham (two); Hockham (two); Holborn; Horning (two); Horsford (two); Horton; Isleworth; Islington (two); King Cross; King's Lynn; Kirby; Bedon; Lancaster; Leeds; Leiston; Little Glemham (two); Leyland (three); Llandewi-Ystradenny (two); Llandrindod Wells (two); London; Longridge; Long Stratton (three); Lowick; Lytham; Maidstone (two); Merrington (two); Mexborough (two); Mile End; Milford; Mollington (two); Moulton; Mulbarton (three); Nechells; Neen; New Brentford; Newton Flotman; Northampton; Norton Bavant; Norwich (two); Nuneham Courtenay; Nunnington (two); Oake; Ockley (two); Openshaw; Ossett; Overchurch; Over Wyresdale; Pentney (two); Pockley; Preston Candover (two); Pulham; Reading; Reigate; Riveraulx; Rosley; St. Clether; St. Michael; Southampton; Salford (two); Saltley; Sapiston; Scole; Settle; Sevenoaks (two); Shirley; Shotley (two); South Heigham; Sparkford (two); Staines; Stanton Lacy; Stepney; Stoke Ash (two); Stowmarket;

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Sywell; Thurgoland (two); Timberland (two); Tonge-cum-Alkington; Tottenham; Tupsley (two); Twickenham; Wendover (two); Westerdale (two); Westerham (two); Weston Turnville (two); Whorlton (two); Wiggington; Withyham; Witley; Wootton Bassett (two); Worth; Wrecclesham (two); Yalding (two); and, Yaxham; to lie upon the Table 1270

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petition from Crewkerne, for Prohibition; to lie upon the Table 1271

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.—Account presented, up to 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1271

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-seventh Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1271

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS.—Copy presented, of Report of the Crofters' Commission for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1271

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large granted to William Jones, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1271

UNDERFED CHILDREN.—Copy presented, of Statement of Information collected by the Board of Education and the Foreign Office regarding methods adopted in great Continental and American cities for dealing with underfed children [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1271

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.—Copy presented, of Return of Grants of Land in the East Africa Protectorate [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1271

TRADE (FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND BRITISH POSSESSIONS).—Copy presented, of Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions for 1905. Volume I. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1272

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3552 and 3553 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1272

LAND REGISTRY.—Return ordered, "showing the work done in the Land Registry, in each of the years 1903, 1904, and 1905, respectively, under the various Acts hereinafter mentioned, namely:—

1. Under the Land Transfer Acts, 1875 and 1897—

(a) The number, value, and acreage (where known) of estates the titles to which were registered, on first registration, from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the numbers of estates registered with absolute, qualified, and possessory title, and good leaseholds; and also the number of estates registered under the Small Holdings Act, 1892;

(b) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905 (i.) by first registration, (ii.) by subdivision of estates already registered, and (iii.) by transfer from the 1862 register ;

(c) The total number of separate titles which have been removed from the register on the 31st day of December, 1905.

2. Under the Land Registry Act, 1862 :—

(a) The total number, value, and acreage (where known) of estates the titles to which were registered on first registration.

(b) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905, (i.) by first registration, and (ii.) by subdivision of estates already registered.

(c) The total number of separate titles which had been removed from the register on the 31st day of December, 1905, otherwise than by transfer to the 1875 register.

3. Under both the Acts of 1875 and 1862 :—

(a) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905.

(b) The total number of transactions registered from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the number of (i.) first registrations under the Acts of 1875 and 1897, (ii.) conveyances, transfers, and transmissions of land, (iii.) mortgages, charges, further charges, and transfers of mortgages and charges, (iv.) reconveyances of mortgages and cessation of charges, (v.) leases and surrenders of leases, (vi.) miscellaneous.

4. Under the Mortgage Debenture Acts, 1865 and 1870, and the Improvement of Land Act, 1864 :—

A statement, so far as may be practicable, of the nature and amount of the work done under these Acts from the 1st day of January, 1902, to the 31st day of December, 1905.

5. Under the Land Charges Registration and Searches Act, 1888, and the Land Charges Act, 1900 :—

The number of registrations, official searches, and ordinary searches made from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905.

6. Under the Middlesex Registry Act, 1708, and the Land Registry (Middlesex Deeds) Act, 1891 :—

The number of registrations and searches made from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905.

And showing the amount of fees received and the amount of salaries and expenses in the Land Registry from the 1st day of April, 1903, to the 31st day of March, 1905, distinguishing for the purposes of Section 22 of the Land Transfer Act, 1897, the fees received and

salaries and expenses paid under the Land Transfer Acts and the other Acts above referred to (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 315, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Rowlands*) 1272

DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).—Return ordered, "of the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into an alleged outrage at Drumdoe House, county Roscommon, on the night of the 11th day of July, 1905." —(*Mr. James O'Kelly*) 1274

STREET BETTING.—Address for "Return of (1) summary convictions for Street Betting in the Metropolitan Police District during the years 1903, 1904, and 1905, showing, as regards each police court district or petty sessional division, (a) the number of persons convicted, (b) the number of persons convicted more than once during those years, and the number of such convictions in each case, (c) the total fines imposed; (2) local Acts in England and Wales, since 1900, providing for fines exceeding £5 in the case of second or subsequent convictions for Street Betting."—(*Mr. Cave*) 1274

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.—Return ordered "as to the number of applications received by County Councils in England and Wales from District Councils to put in force Part III. of The Housing of Working Class Act, 1890, and as to the number of instances in which these applications have been granted, and in cases where they have been refused, the grounds for such refusal; also the number of cases in which resolutions by Parish Councils, under Section 6 of The Housing of Working Classes Act, 1900, have been reported to the County Councils, and as to the Action taken upon such resolutions."—(*Mr. Brodie*) 1274

POST OFFICE (WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY).—Copy ordered, "of Heads of Agreements between the Postmaster-General and Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company, Limited, and the Marconi International Marine Communication Company, Limited, dated the 11th day of August, 1904, with reference to wireless telegraphy."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 123] 1274

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CUSTOMS OFFICIALS AND TRADES ASSOCIATION.—Question, Mr. C. Duncan (Barrow-in-Furness); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1275

FRENCH POLISHING IN DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1275

EXPENDITURE ON NAVAL EDUCATION.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1276

UPHOLSTERING WORK DONE BY WOMEN IN ROYAL DOCKYARDS.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1277

IRISH MAIL CONTRACTS—UNIFORM OF DRIVERS.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1277

TRANSFER OF EMPLOYEES FROM CHATHAM DOCKYARD.—EXPENSES OF REMOVAL.—Question, Mr. E. H. Lamb (Rochester); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1278

CONSTRUCTION OF DUBLIN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1278

IRISH BOARD OF LIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George .. 1278

LABOURERS' COTTAGES AT BALLYGAWLEY, TYRONE.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1279

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT LAND COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh. Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1279

IRISH LAND PURCHASE.—Question, Mr. Samuel Young (Cavan, E.); Answer. Mr. Bryce 1279

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR POSITION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE INSPECTOR AT DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1280

ACCOUNT OF LATE STAFF OFFICER DEEGAN, ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1281

PURCHASE OF ESTATES IN COUNTY MAYO.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1282

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.—Question, Lord Castlereagh (Maidstone); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1282

PURCHASE FOR IRISH LANDS.—Question, Mr. R. Pearce (Staffordshire, Leek); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1283

SALE OF KERRY ESTATES.—Question, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1283

SICK PAY OF LABOURERS EMPLOYED BY DROGHEDA CORPORATION.—Question, Mr. Nolan (Louth, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1284

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE GOLD COAST COLONY.—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1285

WEST AFRICAN MEDICAL SERVICE AND COLOURED PRACTITIONERS.—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1286

PAY, ETC., FOR ROYAL ENGINEERS ENGAGED ON ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1286

ORDNANCE SURVEY DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1287

SCHOOL INSPECTORS IN CARDIFF DISTRICT.—Question, Mr. Guest (Cardiff District) Answer, Mr. Birrell 1288

EDUCATION BILL—SCHOOL HOURS.—Question, Mr Walrond (Devonshire, Tiverton); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1288

HEAD POSTMASTERSHIP.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1289

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EYE (SUFFOLK) ELECTION—POST OFFICE AND ELECTION PAMPHLETS.—Question. Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1290

COMMITTAL OF CHILDREN TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1290

THE TWEED ACT—COMPLAINTS BY ANGLERS.—Question, Mr. E. P. Tennant (Salisbury); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1291

PEEBLESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CLERK AS ELECTION AGENT.—Question, Mr. Lamont (Buteshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1291

EXTENSION OF WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT TO CHANNEL ISLANDS.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1292

COLLECTION OF KING'S TAXES.—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, Mr. Asquith .. 1292

GRANTS FOR SCOTTISH EDUCATION.—Question, Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1292

PAY OF LABOURERS IN IRISH BRANCH ARMY ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.—Question Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Buchanan 1293

EXERCISE OF HORSES FOR THE CURRAGH CAMP—DANGER TO PUBLIC.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1293

TIDWORTH BARRACK SCHEME.—Question, Captain Faber (Hampshire, Andover); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1293

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

RETIRED OFFICERS.—Questions, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis) and Colonel Herbert (Monmouthshire); Answers, Mr. Haldane (Haddington) 1294

MILITARY STATION AT LONDONDERRY.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1295

SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS IN FORT GEORGE.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Mr. Haldane 1295

PLANT AND MACHINERY AT SPARKBROOK FACTORY.—Question, Mr. George Roberts (Norwich); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1297

TRANSVAAL LABOUR IMPORTATION ORDINANCE.—Questions, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. Verney and Mr. Ward; Answers, Mr. Churchill 1298

MARTIAL LAW IN NATAL.—Questions, Mr. J. R. Macdonald (Leicester), Mr. Myer (Lambeth) and Mr. Ward; Answers, Mr. Churchill 1299

NEW RAILWAYS IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. J. Ward; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1301

INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Byles (Salford, N.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1301

SERVIA.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Sir Edward Grey (Northumberland Berwick) 1302

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POLICE CONSTABLES AND ARMY RESERVE.—Questions, Mr. Myer; Answers, Mr. Gladstone (Leeds, W.) 1302

LAMBETH BARBERS AND EARLY CLOSING.—Question, Mr. Seaverns (Lambeth, Brixton); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1303

CONVEYING CONVICTS IN OMNIBUSES.—Question, Mr. Clynes (Manchester, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1303

THE UNEMPLOYED.—Questions, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answers, Mr. John Burns 1304

DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO POOR LAW GUARDIANS.—Question, Mr. Jowett (Bradford, W.); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1305

MAIL SERVICE BETWEEN IRELAND AND ENGLAND.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1306

NEW POST OFFICE AT BANGOR.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1306

POSTMASTER-GENERAL AND TELEPHONE DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. J. Ward; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1307

ST. LEONARDS SORTING OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1307

LORD STANLEY'S PROMISE TO POSTMEN'S FEDERATION.—Question, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1307

THE TURNER PICTURES AT TATE GALLERY.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire) 1308

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. Gibbs (Bristol, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1308

FURNITURE OF NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS.—Question, Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.); Answer, Mr. Birrell (Bristol, N.) 1308

EDUCATION BILL.—Question, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.. 1309

ENGINEER'S REPORT ON CAINAN CANAL.—Question, Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1309

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. John Redmond and Mr. Cullinan; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1309

CONSTABLE ANDERSON.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Bryce .. 1310

REDUCTION OF RENTS, COUNTY DOWN.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1311

PORTADOWN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1312

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1312

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PRINTING CONTRACT OF MULLINGAR BOARD OF GUARDIANS.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1313

RAILWAY EXTENSION IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (Fermanagh); Answer, Mr. Bryce.. 1313

FAIR RENTS IN COUNTY DOWN.—Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1314

MAGOWAN AND THE LARNE COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1315

QUEEN'S SCHOLARS AND SECOND GRADE SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1315

THE BAHR-EL-GAZAL DIFFICULTY.—Questions, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answers, Sir Edward Grey 1317

NEW BILLS.

Hours of Labour (Bakehouses) Bill.—" To restrict the Hours of Labour in Bakehouses to forty-eight hours per week," presented by Mr. Wilkie; supported by Mr. James Haslam, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Jenkins; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 172.] 1317

National Galleries of Scotland Bill.—" To establish a Board of Trustees to manage the National Galleries of Scotland; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 173] 1317

Valuation (Ireland) Bill.—" To effect an equitable administration of any new general Valuation in Ireland," presented by Mr. James O'Connor; supported by Mr. O'Malley and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 174] 1318

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 1318

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House, at the conclusion of the Afternoon Sitting this day, do adjourn until Tuesday, 24th April.'

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House at the conclusion of the Afternoon Sitting this day, do adjourn until Tuesday, 24th April.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.—As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed 1318

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn." —(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*).

Mr. Walter Long (Dublin County, S.) 1319
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1325
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 1329
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 1333
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh 1336
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 1341
Mr. Paul (Northampton) 1346
Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 1349
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddingtonshire) 1352
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 1355
Mr. C. E. Schwann (Manchester, N.) 1359
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1359
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1364
Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.) 1365
Mr. Brooke (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley) 1366
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1367
Mr. J. R. Macdonald (Leicester) 1369
Mr. Gooch (Bath) 1372
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1375
Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire) 1378
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 1379
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1380
The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1380

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Motion for the Adjournment of the House lapsed without Question put.

And the House, pursuant to the Order of the House [this day], stood adjourned till Tuesday, April 24th.

Adjourned at half after Seven of the clock till Tuesday, April 24th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY, 24TH APRIL, 1906.

The House met at 2.45 p.m.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1381

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill.—Read the third time and passed .. 1381

Kidderminster Gas Bill [LORDS]; Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill; Uxbridge Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1381

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [LORDS]; Bridgwater Canals Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 1381

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill. [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 1381

Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 1381

Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; Romford and District Tramways Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed 1381

Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—The Chairman of Ways and Means, in pursuance of Standing Order 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion, the Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Bill 1381

PETITIONS.

Coal Mine (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petition from Allhallows Colliery, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1381

Education Bill (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Aberyskir; Acton; Adlington; Alby; Allestree; Altham (two); Apsley End (two); Aylsham; Barnet; Barrington; Bath (two); Battle (two); Bearsted; Beckley (two); Bedlington (two); Bermondsey; Bettws Penpont; Boston; Boxley (two); Brentford; Broughton; Burnley (two); Butterwick; Burton Agnes (two); Bury; Camberwell; Cawston; Chadderton (two); Chaddesen (two); Chelmsford; Cheltenham; Churchill; Comberton; Coney Weston (two); Coventry; Cowley St. John; Culford (two); Denstone; East Bedlington; East Crompton; Edmonton; Ellastone; Elmswell (four); Far Cotton; Felbrigg cum Metton; Fetcham (two); Flint; Foxholes; Freshwater; Fringford; Frisby; Fulham (four); Gazeley; Gimingham (two); Glasbury; Gosforth; Great Barton (two); Great Greenford; Grindale (two); Hackney; Haggerston (two); Hailey and Crawley; Harphant (two); Hepple; Hilborough; Holwell; Homerton; Horton Kirby; Houghton; Icklingham; Ilfracombe; Isleworth (three); Ixworth (two); Kennington (two); Kenton; Kidlington (two); King's Lynn; Kingstone Lisle; Kirmington (two); Knowl Hill (two); Laugham; Lavenham (two); Leesfield; Little Gaddesden; Little Gransden; Llanfihangel Nantbran (two); Llanfrynach; Llangammarch (two); Langorse (two); Llanveigan; London (two); Loughton; Maidstone; Manchester (three); Marylebone (two); Meesdon; Melbourne; Melksham; Mellis; Milton; Nafferton (two); Neasden; North Kensington; Norton juxta Malton (two); Nottingham; Old Brentford; Papworth Everard; Park Bridge; Penley; Poplar; Radley (two); Raughton Head with Gatesgill (two); Rockland; Rothbury; Rudby; Rudby in Cleveland; Rugby; Rumburgh; St. Albans; St. Osyth; St. Pancras (two); Saltney (two); Sheering (two); Sidcup (two); Skirbeck; Sotby; South Croydon; Southfleet; South Lynn, All Saints; South Mymms; South Tottenham; Stanton; Stanton by Bridge; Stockport; Stoke in Coventry; Stoke d'Abernon; Stoneyholme; Swavasey; Swindon; Tackley; Thelnetham (two); Traianglas (two); Trunch; Upper Norwood; Walham Green; Warham; Weaverthorpe; Wendlebury (two); West Green; West Kington; Whorlton (two); Willesden; Wolvercote; Wolverhampton; and, Woodhouse; to lie upon the Table 1382

Land Values (Assessment and Rating Bill).—Petition from Hackney, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1383

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Liquor Traffic Local Veto.—Petition from Crewkerne, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1383

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from Broadstairs, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1383

Mal, Sanna.—Petition of Sanna Mal, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 1383

Mull, Mehta Fong.—Petition of Mehta Fong Mull, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table 1383

South Africa (Native Rising in Natal).—Petition of Alfred Magena, for inquiry by the Imperial Government; to lie upon the Table 1383

Tuberculosis (Animals) Prevention and Compensation Bill.—Petition from Dundee, against; to lie upon the Table 1383

Vaccination Acts.—Petition from Liverpool, for repeal; to lie upon the Table 1383

Parliamentary Papers (Recess).—The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3554 to 3562.

2. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series.) Copy of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 648.

3. Treaty Series (No. 3, 1906).—Copy of Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United Kingdom and Roumania. Signed at Bucharest, 31st October, 1905. Ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, 17th March, 1906.

4. Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland).—Copy of Fifth Annual General Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, 1904–5.

5. Royal Observatory (Edinburgh).—Copy of Sixteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

6. Electric Power and Supply Bills.—Copy of Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills.

7. Uganda Protectorate.—Copy of Report on a Botanical Mission through the Forest Districts of Buddu and the Western and Nile Provinces of the Uganda Protectorate, by Mr. M. T. Dawe, Officer in Charge, Forestry and Scientific Department.

8. Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, Gibraltar.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to measures adopted for checking the spread of Venereal Disease.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 1383

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Egypt (No. 1, 1906).—Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1384

British Museum.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Rothschild*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.] .. 1384

Companies (Winding-Up) Act, 1890.—Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.] 1384

Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Proceedings).—Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.] 1385

Superannuation Act, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th April, 1906, declaring that Robert William Street, Boy, Ordnance Vessel "Prudent," War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1385

Greek Loan of 1898.—Account presented, up to 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1385

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Departmental Committee).—Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into the Aetiology, Pathology, and Morbid Anatomy and other matters connected with the diseases of sheep known as louping-ill and braxy. Parts I., II., and III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1385

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Copy presented, of Forty-ninth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1905. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1385

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licence).—Copy presented, of Licences granted to James Kitching and Frederick Sadler, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1385

Police (Counties and Boroughs, England and Wales).—Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 127.] 1385

Navy (Officers).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Bellairs*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.] 1386

Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th March; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 129.] 1386

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PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Thames Conservancy, General Reports and Accounts of the Conservators for 1905; [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 130.]

2. County Court Rules.—Copy of County Court Rules, dated 4th April, 1906, with Explanatory Memorandum [by Act] 1386

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (IRELAND) (FEMALE INSPECTORS).—Return ordered, "showing what Local Authorities in Ireland in the year 1905 had appointed (*a*) Female Sanitary Sub-Officers; and (*b*) Male and Female Inspectors of workshops who are not also sanitary sub-officers; and the number and salaries of the officers appointed in each case (being supplementary to the Returns Nos. 87 and 342, of Session 1905, as regards England and Wales, and Scotland, respectively."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 1386

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SAILORS AND HUMANE SOCIETY MEDALS.—Question, Major Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1386

ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1387

ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1388

GOVERNMENT SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1389

BARRELS MADE AT DEPTFORD VICTUALLING YARD.—Question, Mr. Higham (Yorks, W.R., Sowerby); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1389

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS.—Question, Mr. Rowlands (Kent, Dartford); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1389

ALCOHOL FOR INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.—Question, Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1391

COLLECTION OF KING'S TAXES.—Question, Mr. Maddison (Burnley); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1391

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE—PROBATIONERS AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY.—Question, Sir H. Cotton (Nottingham, E.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1392

EUROPEAN AND NATIVE CANDIDATES FOR INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.—Question, Sir H. Cotton; Answer, Mr. Morley 1392

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

BEALING BY "BRITANNIA" CADETS.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1393

NAVAL CADETS AT OSBORNE.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1393

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CHATHAM DOCKYARD—BREAKING UP OF WAR VESSELS.—Question, Mr. Higham (Yorks, W. R., Sowerby); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1394

ADMIRALTY YACHT "ENCHANTRESS."—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1394

COST OF SWORD BAYONETS.—Question, Mr. Higham; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1394

COST OF RIFLE MANUFACTURE.—Question, Mr. Higham; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1395

THE ROSS-SHIRE MILITIA.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answers, Mr. Haldane 1395

BRITISH INDIAN EMIGRATION LAWS.—Question, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1397

INDIAN ARMY—DENIAL OF DISAFFECTION RUMOURS.—Questions, Dr. Rutherford (Middlesex, Brentford), Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), and Sir H. Cotton (Nottingham, E.); Answers, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) 1397

CROFTERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1398

IRISH CROWN PROSECUTORS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, The Attorney-General (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) 1399

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—KING HARMAN ESTATE.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Cherry 1400

IRISH SCHOOL BUILDING GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1401

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated Mr. Bright to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Mr. Bryn Roberts.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Brynmor Jones.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1401

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Order for resuming Adjourned Debate [this day] on Amendment to Second Reading [2nd March] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn 1402

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LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c., (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question proposed, "That the Order [23rd March] for resuming the adjourned debate on the Motion for committing the Land Values Taxation, etc. (Scotland) Bill to the Standing Committee on Law, etc., be read, and discharged, and the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of fifteen Members."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1402
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*) 1403
Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 1404
Mr. Younger (*Ayr, Burghs*) 1405
The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs*) 1406

Question put and agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee of fifteen members.

NOTICES OF ACCIDENTS BILL.—As amended (by the Standing Committee) considered.

Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1407

New clause.

"(1)—(a) On or before the twenty-first day of January in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every coal mine shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a correct return specifying, with respect to the year ending on the preceding thirty-first day of December, such particulars as the Secretary of State may prescribe of all accidents which occurred in or about such coal mine during the year to which the return relates, and disabled for more than seven days any person employed in or about such mine from working at his ordinary work; (b) On or before the first day of February in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every metalliferous mine shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a like correct return; (c) On or before the first day of February in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every quarry shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a like correct return. (2) The expression "coal mine" means and includes mines of coal, mines of stratified iron-stone, mines of shale, and mines of fire-clay. (3) The expression "metalliferous mine" means and includes every mine of whatever description other than a coal mine. (4) The expression "quarry" means and includes every place (not being a mine) in which persons work in getting slate, stone, coprolites, or other minerals, and any part of which is more than twenty feet deep. (5) The expression "mine" includes every shaft or pit in the course of being sunk, and every level and inclined plane in the course of being driven, and all the shafts, levels, planes, works, machinery, tramways, and sidings, both below ground and above ground, in and adjacent to and belonging to the mine. (6) The expressions "owner" and "agent" shall have the same meaning as in The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887."—(*Lord R. Cecil.*)

Brought up and read a first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be now read a second time."

The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 1409
Mr. Samuel Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 1410

Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 1411
The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 1413
Mr. Rawlinson (*Cambridge University*) 1415
Mr. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 1416

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 41, Noes, 231. (Division List No. 47.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.—As amended (by the Standing Committee) considered.

Amendments proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, at beginning, to insert 'Where such a direction is given.'"

"In line 22, to leave out 'a' and insert 'the.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Dr. Shipman (*Northampton*) 1421
Mr. Herbert Samuel 1421

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 26, at end, to add the words 'and no rateable deductions shall be made from such extra pay under Section 15 of the Police Act, 1890.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Pickersgill (*Bethnal Green, S. W.*) 1422

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, lines 3 and 4, to leave out, 'police authority shall, and if he,' in order to insert 'or.'"

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. Herbert Samuel 1422

Amendment agreed to.

Amendments proposed—

"In page 2, line 5, to leave out the words 'may, if they think fit,' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

"In page 2, line 26, leave out the words 'called out,' and insert the word 'required.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Mr. Herbert Samuel 1423

Amendments proposed—

"In page 3, lines 16 and 17, to leave out the words 'chief officer of police,' and insert the words 'constable above the rank of inspector.'"

"In line 18, to leave out the word 'officer's' and insert the word 'constable's.'"

"In line 20, to leave out the word 'officers-' and insert the word 'constable's.'"

"In line 23, to leave out the words 'chief officer of police appointed' and insert the words 'constable holding a rank above that of inspector.'"

"In line 24, at end, to insert '(2) Where a constable is compelled to retire under this section, and is not entitled without a medical certificate to retire and receive a pension, he shall be entitled to receive such a pension or may be granted such a gratuity as he would have been entitled to receive or as might have been granted to him had he then retired on a medical certificate.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.—Read a second time and committed for to-morrow.

Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange*) .. 1424

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 1427
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 1432
Mr. James Campbell (*Dublin University*) 1434
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 1440
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 1442

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Thomas Corbett.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 52; Noes, 251. (Division List No. 48.)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Barrie (*Londonderry, N.*) 1445
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (*Fermanagh, N.*) 1447

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the word 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Barrie.*)

April 24.] *Page*

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 1450
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1453
Mr. Cherry 1456

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 237 ; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 49.)

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 229 ; Noes, 34. (Division List, No. 50.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Reserve Forces Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Character Bill.—Read a second time, an committed for To-morrow.

Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of any Expenses and allowances incurred under any Act of the present session to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901.—*Mr. Kearley.*

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Alkali, &c., Works Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

SUPPLY [29TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £490,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907.

Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 1466

Resolution agreed to.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £819,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, etc., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 141,058 including 8,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Mr. Weir 1466
Mr. Haldane 1467
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 1468

Resolution agreed to.

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £423,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances of the Imperial Yeomanry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Mr. George Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 25TH APRIL.

The House met at a quarter to Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dover Harbour Board Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1469

West Middlesex Roads Bill.—Order [27th February] that the West Middlesex Roads Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1469

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).—SIR LEWIS MCIVER reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills; That Mr. Robert Duncan, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Ordered, That Mr. Robert Duncan do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills on Friday, at eleven of the clock 1469

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the South Shields Gas Bill in Session 1904 be referred to the Select Committee on the Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*) 1469

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PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Bargoed (two); Batley; Birley; Cannock Chace; Cefyn Brithdir; Chickenley Heath; Corton Wood; Fence Branch; Lidgett; Netherton; North Somerset; North Stavely; Ravensthorpe; Roundwood; Sharlston; Tankersley; Warren Vale; Wath Main; Wharncliffe Silkstone; and Whitwood Collieries; to lie upon the Table. 1469

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of law: From Aberaman; Adderley; Aldeburgh; Aldershot (two); Almondbury (three); Amersham; Ashford; Ashmanhaugh; Ashwell Thorpe; Aston (two); Aston Abbotts; Awbridge; Aylesbury (two); Aylmerton; Ayres Quay; Badgworth (two); Bagby; Bamford (two); Barkston; Barnsley; Barton Bendish; Batley Carr (two); Beamish; Bear Wood; Beckingham; Bedwardine; Beguildy (two); Belchamp St. Paul; Bengeworth (two); Bethnal Green (six); Bickley; Bickley with Wedmore; Birkenhead (three); Birkenshaw; Birkenshaw cum Hunsworth; Bishop Middleham (two); Bishopwearmouth; Blackburn (two); Black Torrington (three); Blaxhall; Bledlow (two); Blofield; Bolney; Bolton; Boughrood; Bradford; Bradwell (two); Brancepeth; Brant Broughton; Brawdy with Hayscastle (two); Bray; Brewood; Brighouse; Bromley; Brownhill; Burnham Westgate and Burnham Overy; Burston; Burton (two); Burton Joyce; Bury; Canterbury (two); Capel Colman and Llanfihangel Penbedw (two); Cardigan; Carew (two); Carlton Colville; Cassop (two); Castlemartin (two); Cawthorne; Chatburn; Child's Ercall; Chillingham; Chilworth (two); Chiselborough; Chobham; Chorlton (two); Church Stretton; Cleckheaton (nine); Cleobury Mortimer; Clevedon (two); Clydey (two); Clyro; Cockley Clay; Coleford; Collingham Bridge; Colewich (two); Crakehall (two); Cranford (two); Cranworth (two); Cregrina; Cringleford; Crosland Moor (two); Crowle; Culmington (two); Darlton (two); Darton; Denby; Denton; Dersingham; Dewsbury; Dickleburgh; Dinton (two); Diss; Dodworth; Downside; Dunstan; Durham-on-Trent; Ealing (nine); East Acton; East Boldre; East Bradenham; Earl Soham; Earl Stoneham; Earls Heaton; Earsham; East Stonehouse (two); Edmondsham (two); Elland (two); Ellingham; Ellington; Elson (two); Enfield; Esh (two); Eversley; Exeter; Failsworth (two); Fareham; Farlow; Farnley Tyas; Feering; Feltwell; Fittleworth; Ford; Forncett; Foston; Freystrop; Freystrop and Haroldston; Fulwell; Gawthorpe; Gildersome; Golcar; Gomersal (two); Great Marsden; Great Missenden; Guist; Gladestry; Haddesley; Halifax; Halvergate; Hanbury (two); Harton (two); Havant (two); Headless Cross; Heaton; Hebburn (three); Hebburn-on-Tyne (three); Hedenham; Hedworth (two); Henfield; Heswell; Heworth (two); Heywood; High Littleton; Hillingdon West; Hindringham; Hipswell (two); Hollingworth; Holmebridge; Honley (two); Horbury; Horbury Bridge; Horkstow (two); Horning; Horwich; Huddersfield (eleven); Hythe (two); Ilston; Ipswich; Islip; Jarrow Grange (two); Kea; Kelsale; Kelshall; Kenley; Kentish Town; Kessingland; Kingston Peverill with Monkton Peverill; Kingwinsford; Kirby Cane; Kirby Fleetham with Fencote; Kirby Knowle; Kirkburton; Kirk Deighton; Kirk Fenton (two); Knighton; Knutton; Lawrenny (two); Laxfield; Layburn (two); Lilley; Limehouse; Linthwaite (four); Little Missenden (two); Little Newcastle (two); Liversedge (five); Llanarthney (two):; Llanddarog (two); Llanddeiniol (two); Llanegwad; Llangattock-vibon-Avel; Llangoedmore; Llangynfelyn; Llanrhystyd (two); Llansaintfraed-in-Eloel and Bettws Disserth (two); Llanstephan (two); Llantwit Fardre; Llanvair Kilgeddon;

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London (three); Long Bennington; Longdon; Longhurst; Lyndhurst; Madeley (two); Maldon (two); Malvern Link (two); Mamble (two); Manchester (two); Manorowen; Marloes; Marloes and St. Brides; Marsden; Martham; Meltham (two); Merthyr (two); Middlestown; Minstead; Misterton; Mold Green (two); Montacute (two); Monken Hadley; Monkokehampton; Moreton; Morley Moylgrove; Nantmel; Newcastle (two); Newport (Pem.) (three); Newton Flotham; Norden (two); Norland; Northampton; Northgate (two); North Tuddenham; Norwich; Notting Hill; Oby; Odcombe (two); Old Trafford (two); Orleton; Ossett cum Gawthorpe; Outwell; Oving; Ovington; Padiham; Park Mill; Penbryn (two); Pennard (two); Pennington; Pirbright (two); Pitchcott; Plaistow (three); Poringland; Preston Gobbalds (two); Preston Plucknett and Brympton; Prince's Risborough (two); Purbrook (two); Puttenham (two); Rashcliffe; Raveningham; Reading; Redenhall with Harleston and Wortwell (two); Rendlesham; Rhosmarket; Rhydberth (two); Ringland; Robert Town; Robeston Wathen (two); Rochford (two); Romsey (two); Runton; Rushbury; St. Thomas on the Bourne; Salford; Sandal (three); Sandal Magna (five); Sarisbury (two); Saxlingham Thorpe; Sedgeford Seissett; Selby; Shadforth; Shelfanger; Shelley (three); Sherfield on Loddon; Shinfield; Shireoaks; Shithington; Silchester; Silkstone (three); Skenfrith (two); Slaithwaite; Slindon; Sotterley with Wittingham; South Acton; South Crosland; South Elemham; South Hetton; South Ossett; Staincliffe (two); Stamford; Standlynch with Charlton (two); Stanley; Stanmer and Falmer; Stoke Godlington; Stow Bedon; Stretford (three); Sunderland (two); Surlingham; Swainsthorpe (two); Swansea (two); Swanton Abbot; Syston; Talbenny; Tarleton (three); Teddesley Hay; The Lee; Thornden; Thornes (two); Thornham; Thornhill (three); Thornhill Lees (two); Thurgoland (two); Thurlstone (four); Tibberton; Tilford (two); Tintinhull (two); Tintwistle; Tongham; Tritlington; Turton; Uffington (three); Upperthong; Wakefield (eight); Walton, Aylesbusy (two); Walton West; Walwyn's Castle (two); Warkworth; Warmfield (four); Warnham (two); Watton-at-Stone (two); Weare; Wednesbury (two); Welby; Welland; Wensley; West Bradenham (two); Westgate Common; West Ham; Weston (two); West Winch; White Chapel; Whitgreave (two); Whitley Lower; Wickham Market (two); Windsor; Woking (two); Wooler; Wolverstone (two); Wordsley; Worplesdon (two); Worsthorne; Wraysbury; Wreningham; Wrenthorpe (two); Yateley (two); and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table 1469

JURORS' EXPENSES BILL.—Petition from Essex, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1472

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Gateshead, against; to lie upon the Table 1472

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Stranraer, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1472

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.—Petition from Henfield, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1472

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from the Congregational Union of Scotland; and Stranraer; to lie upon the Table .. 1472

RAO, R. JAYARAJA.—Petition from R. Jayaraja Rao, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 1473

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VACCINATION ACTS.—Petitions for repeal; from Brierfield; Leicester; and Nelson; to lie upon the Table 1473

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.—Petitions for alteration; from Batley; Belfast; Bolton; Bradford; Brighton; Bristol; Dublin; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Hanley; Kilmarnock; Liverpool; London; Manchester; Newcastle-on-Tyne; Oxford; Paisley; Pontypridd; Preston; and Taunton; to lie upon the Table 1473

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL MINES.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; Mr. Verney]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.] 1473

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report Annual Series, No. 3563 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1473

EXPORTS TO CHINA AND SOUTH AMERICA.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th March; Viscount Turnour]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.] 1473

SUGAR (COST) (LONDON, PARIS, AND BERLIN).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; Mr. Toulmin]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.] 1473

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Local Loans Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1905, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 133.]

2. Irish Land Purchase Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, from 1st November, 1903, to 21st March, 1905, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 134.] 1473

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—BURNS-HARTOPP ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1474

KILGARVAN EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1474

IRISH TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGES.—Question, Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1475

IRISH ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1475

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, OSBORNE.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1476

INCOME TAX COMMISSIONERS—CLERKS' REMUNERATION.—Question, Mr. Sears (Cheltenham); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1476

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PAYMENT OF ARMY PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Godfrey Baring (Isle of Wight); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1477

THE JUDGE-ADVOCATE-GENERAL.—Question, Mr. Paul (Northampton); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1477

ARMY CADETS' FEES.—Question, Mr. Rufus Isaacs (Reading); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1478

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

WELSH COAL—SUBMERGING EXPERIMENTS.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1478

MECHANICIAN WATCHKEEPERS IN THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1479

CARNARVONSHIRE SCHOOLS—FURNISHING DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1479

ISLAND OF LEWIS SQUATTERS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1480

LOCHS SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1481

PEATS FOR SCOTTISH SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair .. 1481

Trades Disputes Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

The Solicitor-General (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) 1482

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood) 1496
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1501
Mr. Clavell Salter (Hants, Basingstoke) 1507
Mr. Clement Edwards (Denbigh Districts) 1513
Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 1521
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1524
Mr. Rufus Isaacs (Reading) 1536
Sir Francis Lowe (Birmingham, Edgbaston) 1542

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

[MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

(In the Committee.)

April 25.] *Page*

Clause 1 :—

Mr. Luttrell (*Devonshire, Tavistock*) 1543

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, at the end, to add the words 'and in lieu thereof shall be substituted nomination by every town council within the meaning of The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, of any borough or city having a separate commission of the peace, and any county councils established under the Local Government Act, 1888, within whose jurisdiction any municipal borough not having a separate commission of the peace or any petty sessional division of a county is situate who shall, subject to the conditions hereinafter mentioned, respectively have the right to nominate a person or persons for appointment to the office of a justice or justices of the peace within such borough, city, or county respectively in the manner hereinafter described.'" —(*Mr. Luttrell*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir W. Robson 1545
Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*) 1545
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1545
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 1547

Question put and negatived.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

Lord R. Cecil 1548

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 273 ; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 51.)

Clause 2 :—

Mr. William Rutherford 1551

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified.'" (*Mr. Watson Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. Nield (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 1551
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 1552

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

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VACCINATION.

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) took the Chair.]

Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 1552
Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland, Tyneside) 1558

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, vaccination ought no longer to be obligatory on those who regard it as useless or dangerous."—(*Mr. Lupton.*)

Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.) 1561
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1562
Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) 1567
Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.) 1567

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1570
Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) 1571

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that sex should cease to be a bar to the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise."—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) 1572
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1575
Mr. Bottomley (Hackney, S.) 1578
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin County, S.) 1579
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1581
Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 1582

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Aliens Bill

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report progress ; to sit again to-morrow 1587

Limited Partnerships Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1588

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

April 25.] *Page*

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified.'" —(*Mr. Watson Rutherford.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the clause."

And, it being after Eleven of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next 1588

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS [STAMP DUTY].—Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of a stamp duty on certificates of registration of Alkali and other works in pursuance of any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Alkali, etc., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892, and the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament, of salaries and remuneration and of expenses incurred in the execution of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*Mr. George Whiteley*) 1588

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Eleven o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOLUME CLV.

VOLUME CLV.

ERRATA.

April 4. Mr. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid).—In Col. 564, line 44, *for* "found fault" *read* "agreed."

In Col. 564, line 45, *for* the second "for" *read* "in."

In Col. 565, line 28, *for* "society" *read* "committee."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIRST SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY IN THE SIXTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1906.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 30th March, 1906.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent: 1. Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Act, 1906; 2. Army (Annual) Act, 1906.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to the county of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) was presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*) (for the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell); read 1^a; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, section 7) deemed to have been read 2^a; and reported from the Committee; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next. (No. 42.)

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.]. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

RETURNS REPORTS ETC.

ARMY.

General annual report of the British Army for the year ended September 30th, 1905.

(Militia Training Establishments) Militia Training Return, 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Report of the state of the finances of the University of Glasgow under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1904–1905.

COURT OF PROBATE DIVISION (HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE) (IRELAND).

Annual account of receipts and disbursements, for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION.

Petition in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools; of teachers, parents, and guardians of children attending schools at Accrington St. James; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE CANADIAN TARIFF.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY rose to call attention to the growth of imports from the United Kingdom into Canada under the preferential tariff; and to move for a Return showing the imports of merchandise into Canada from the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Germany respectively, distinguishing "dutiable" and "free" goods, from 1890 to 1904.

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I do not desire to take up much of the time of your Lordships in moving for the Return which I have placed on the Paper, especially as I understand that there will be, on behalf of the Board of Trade, no opposition to the granting of this particular Return. Although the subject to which my notice alludes does in a not very indirect way find itself related to what is known as the fiscal question, I do not desire at this moment to raise that controversial subject so much as to deal with questions of fact as regards the existing system, the exact determination of which I am sure will be wished for by all parties in your Lordships' House, whatever their views may be on the controversial points.

I do not think it is necessary in this House to deal with the history of the Canadian preference, but in the numerous controversies which have taken place on that subject we have not had accessible to us figures which would enable us conclusively to show what the course of that preference has been, because so far we have not had in official returns a distinction between dutiable and free goods; and it is obvious, of course, that, if you are dealing with the result of a preference which can only be given by one country to another on goods upon which a duty is charged at the port of entry, you cannot have a real judgment on the effect of that preference unless and until you have a Return which shows its effect on goods only upon which a duty is charged. That, therefore, is the Return which I hope the Government may be able to grant in order to enable us to arrive at an accurate estimate of the effect of the preference.

I have been at some pains to endeavour to arrive at those figures myself, and have gone to the Canadian Returns in order to get them. It is unnecessary to trouble your Lordships with a long list of those figures, especially if the Government will grant the Return for which I move; but so far as I have been able to discover, when dealing with goods which are classed as dutiable you will find that in every case the result of the preference has been to arrest a decrease in the importation into Canada of British goods and to turn that decline into an increase. From 1890 to 1894 the textile goods from the United Kingdom that found their way into Canada averaged 17 million dollars. In the next period, 1895 to 1899, the figure dropped to 13·7 million dollars; and then, when the preference was given, the imports in textile goods increased in the following five years to 20·5 million dollars. I give that as one instance. No matter what class of goods you take, upon which, being dutiable, a preference is given, you will find that a rapid decline in British goods going into Canada was arrested and turned into an increase.

The other noticeable figures as concerning other countries show that, whereas before the preference there was a decline in the importation of British goods which was arrested and turned in the opposite direction, in the case of Germany, the United States, and other countries the increase of their imports into Canada was steady both before and after the preference was given. It is needless for me to say that my own view on the subject is that it is nothing short of a national misfortune that we should not take immediate steps in this country to increase that preference by means of altering our own fiscal system. I do not desire to bring that consideration before your Lordships at this moment. I am only asking for a Return of the unquestioned facts upon which we can rely in future debates.

I would wish, while alluding to this question, to ask for certain information from the representative of the Board of Trade with regard to the general trend of the present fiscal arrangements with Canada. It is an understood thing that, upon whatever issue the present Government were returned, their present policy is to leave the fiscal question entirely alone, and to maintain what they term the present free trade system. Yet we have to recognise in this House that our Colonies have their own fiscal question to consider. Our considerations may have some relation to it. They may be indirectly connected. But they have their own fiscal situation to consider, and I would like to ask the Board of Trade whether they are taking note of the course of events in Canada, and whether they can give any information to the House with regard to the Tariff Commission now sitting in Canada.

I do not think it will have escaped the notice of this House that in the Dominion House of Commons last year the Finance Minister of Canada announced the intention of that country to establish a maximum tariff and a minimum tariff to be granted to countries which treated Canadian goods fairly, and beyond that, a preferential tariff for goods coming from Great Britain. That is the declared policy of Canada, independent, as I understand it, of any fiscal policy that may be entertained in the United Kingdom. It will not have escaped the attention of your Lordships that there have appeared in the Press reports of dealings between the Canadian Tariff Commissioners, who are considering and arranging the tariff on that basis, and South Africa—negotiations for some preference between Canada and South Africa. There is also some talk in the papers of negotiations between Canada and Germany, particularly as regards coastwise trade between those two countries. There has also been published in the newspapers a Memorandum from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, which represents 2,000 members and a capital of £80,000,000, setting forth fully their policy and their desires; and the desire, among other things, that the surplus requirements of Canada, so far as reasonably may be, should be bought from British sources. On these considerations, and on the situation as regards preference generally, I should be glad if the Board of Trade could tell us whether they have any information to give.

I should also like to ask them whether, in the development of what I will call the fiscal question in Canada, the fiscal policy outlined by the Finance Minister in last year's Budget, His Majesty's Government imagine that under our present system they have any *locus standi* for dealing? We see negotiations going on between one of our greatest Colonies and various foreign countries. Canadian manufacturers and others point out that, to a very large extent, the existing classification of goods under the present Canadian tariff acts practically as a preference to the United States of America. That is to say, the class of goods which are admitted free under the Canadian tariff are just that class of goods which it is easy for the United States of America to import into Canada, and which are so classified and so arranged as to act as a preference to the United States as against other countries, especially Great Britain.

Under the present classification there are only a limited number of articles upon which the preference granted to England is of any practical advantage to the British manufacturers. That is a complicated and intricate question, but I think it is important for this country to know, while these negotiations are going on between Canada and foreign countries upon their fiscal system, whether, quite apart from what is known as our fiscal question, the Board of Trade consider that they have any *locus standi* as regards the Tariff Commission now sitting in Canada, because I venture to think that all parties in this House, even those who object most to the proposals to set up a preferential tariff in this country, will be agreed that the promotion of trade, purely considered as trade, between this country and Canada can but be of mutual advantage. Therefore I would ask His Majesty's Government if they can give any information to the House on these points now or in the future, and I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved, for a Return showing the imports of merchandise into Canada from the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Germany respectively, distinguishing "dutiable" and "free" goods, from 1890 to 1904.—(*Viscount Ridley.*)

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the information for which the noble Viscount asks is easily obtainable, and the Board of Trade will have much pleasure in giving him the Return. It may, perhaps, be of interest if I sketch briefly the history of the Canadian preferential tariff. In April, 1897, a reduction of one-eight from the duties fixed by the Canadian tariff, with certain exceptions, was granted by Canada to goods the produce of countries granting to Canadian produce equal terms. The amount of the preference was increased to one-fourth on July 1st, 1893, and from August 1st, 1898, the preference was confined to goods produced in and imported direct from the United Kingdom and its Colonies and possessions. In July, 1900, the preference was further increased from one-fourth to one-third. In April, 1903, German goods imported into Canada were subjected to a surtax of one-third of the general tariff rates of duty.

As regards the effect of the preferential tariff upon trade with the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany, it may be said at once that previous to its operation there had been a general tendency to decline on the part of imports into Canada from this country, and that this decline has been checked and replaced by a very considerable increase. But it must be remembered that this increase has affected imports from other countries at least as much as those from the United Kingdom. I think we may take it that it is really a case of general prosperity all round. There has been a great influx of immigrants into Canada, and consequently with an augmented population the wants of the country have increased. In 1890–1 the total value of imports of merchandise into Canada from the United Kingdom was £8,500,000, the figures for succeeding years showing a continuous decline to £6,000,000 in 1896–7. Since that year the value has continuously increased, and in 1904–5 it stood at about £12,500,000. In the meantime imports from the United States have increased from £11,750,000 to £31,250,000.

Your Lordships must also bear in mind that the increase of imports from this country might have been greater but for the fact that the effect to the Canadian tariff as a whole is to discourage the importation of manufactured goods more than that of raw materials. Our exports to Canada consist more largely of manufactured goods than do those of the United States, and consequently the average *ad valorem* incidence of the tariff on United Kingdom goods in 1904–5 was 19 per cent., while in the case of the United States goods it was only 14 per cent.

I now turn to the imports of the principal textile goods in which United Kingdom trade is particularly interested. The figures have been got out for the years 1892–3, 1896–7, 1904–5, and they deal separately with (1) cotton goods, (2) woollen goods, (3) flax, hemp, and jute goods, and (4) carpets, curtains, and oil-cloths. Taking these four groups together, we find that since 1896–7 British textiles have increased by 127 per cent. against an increase in the total from all sources of 116 per cent. It may also interest your Lordships to know the consumption per head of British textiles by the Canadian population. That consumption is relatively small when compared with that of Australia and New Zealand, these latter Colonies taking about three times as much per head of this class of our exports as Canada. The same thing holds good as regards colonial imports of British goods in general, as will be recognised from the fact that, while Canada took our goods in 1904–5 to the value of £2 4s. 0d. per head, Australia took £5 12s. 0d. worth in 1904, and New Zealand £8 17s. 0d. worth for the same year

The whole growth of Canadian trade between 1896–7, the last year before the reciprocal tariff came into force, and 1904–5 was about £30,000,000, of which about £12,500,000 may be ascribed to free goods, another £12,500,000 to goods subjected to the general tariff, and the remaining £5,000,000 to goods admitted under preference. As between these years, imports from this country have increased from £6,000,000 to £12,500,000 but, on the other hand, as I have already mentioned, United States imports have increased from £11,750,000 to £31,250,000, while German imports remain practically at the same figure as in 1896–7. German imports reached their zenith in 1902–3 when they touched £2,500,000. They have since declined to about half that amount. There is one other point I should like to mention — the essential difference between Canadian trade relations with the United Kingdom and the United States respectively. Canadian trade with the United Kingdom shows a large excess of exports, while with the United States it shows a large excess of imports. Canada exported to this country during 1904–5 nearly £20,000,000 worth of goods of her own production, as against £12,500,000 worth imported from the United Kingdom for consumption — i.e., an excess of exports to the value of £7,250,000. On the other hand, Canada imported £31,000,000 worth of goods from the United States for consumption, and exported to the United States £14,000,000 worth of her own produce, there being in this case an excess of imports to the value of £16,000,000. This shows that we are, on the whole, a better customer for Canadian products than Canada is for United Kingdom products, whereas the reverse is the case between Canada and the United States. The Board of Trade have watched very carefully the whole trend of matters with regard to the Tariff Commission which is sitting at the present moment in Canada, but they have no figures on that to give to the noble Viscount.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Why should the Return which it is proposed to give not include the whole of the imports into Canada, instead of being limited to imports from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany?

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: The noble Viscount only asked for a Return showing the imports for those three countries. If the noble Duke wishes a Return in respect of other countries as well, I do not imagine that there will be any objection to granting it.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The Return will be more useful if it is complete.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: Does the noble Duke wish that course pursued?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Yes, unless there is any objection.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: Then I will add in the Motion the words "and other countries" after "Germany."

On Question, Motion, as amended, agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL. [H.L.]

Order of the day read for receiving the Report of Amendment.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, in moving the adoption of the Report, I should like to say a few words on the omission of Clause II by the Standing Committee, on the Motion of Lord Knutsford, supported by Lord Halsbury. The Clause was as follows—

> "If at any time when the capital of the firm is diminished in amount the limited partner receives interest or profits on his share, he shall be liable to the creditors of the firm to the amount so received by him."

The object was to prevent a limited partner receiving back his capital, or part of it, under the disguise of a division of profits, when none had really been made. It is obvious that this would remove the security on the faith of which creditors had trusted the firm. It was inserted to protect the public. Of course, I recognise the great authority of my two noble friends, but I confess that their arguments have not convinced me. The Clause still seems to me, if not necessary, at any rate very desirable. However, if my noble friends are still of opinion that the Clause is undesirable I am ready to leave the responsibility to them, fully recognising the great weight which justly attaches to their opinion. I beg to move the Report.

Moved, "That this Report be now received."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

THE NATAL CRISIS.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, before the House adjourns I should like to ask the Colonial Secretary whether the Government can give us any information since that given yesterday with respect to the state of affairs in Natal?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I have received a telegram from the Governor of Natal explaining in detail the circumstances preceding the sentences by court-martial upon the twelve natives implicated in the murders which took place in February. I will now proceed to give the substance of the telegram to the House.

The Governor states that on March 15th at a meeting of Ministers he suggested to them that the charge of murder should be withdrawn in the case of prisoners being tried by court-martial at Richmond, and that as regards that portion of indictment it should be dealt with by the civil tribunals. Ministers, however, expressed the opinion that the state of disaffection amongst the natives of this colony was by no means at an end and that it was only because of prompt measures taken by the Government to deal with such disaffection that a large number of natives were not in open rebellion. Several tribes who had openly defied magistrate (s) had still to be dealt with and a Militia force was at present proceeding against them. Ministers were convinced that for dealing promptly with natives who had taken up arms the same urgency for trial by court-martial then existed as at first and that any interference with the court-martial now sitting would have disastrous effect on natives generally. Further, that such interference would probably conduce to outbreak in the near future, as any sign of weakness or indecision on the part of Government would immediately be observed by the natives, who for the most part are adopting waiting attitude.

The Governor's reply was to the effect that, although prompt measures were still necessary to prevent disaffection spreading amongst the native population, there was not at present any pressing necessity for continuing to give the Commandant of Militia power of life and death in cases tried by court-martial, although he was perfectly satisfied with the manner in which he had discharged this duty. He therefore desired to withdraw the delegation to the commandant under martial law of the authority to confirm or revise sentences of court-martial. In future cases he proposed, as Commander-in-Chief, to consult the Colonial Government and confirm or revise such sentences himself. He had satisfied himself that the courts-martial were being well conducted, and that no injustice would be perpetrated, and as, moreover, he had been impressed with the coolness and judgment displayed by Ministers during the present crisis, he did not desire to press home his suggestion that charges of murder should be dealt with by the civil tribunals of the colony. Ministers did not raise any objection to the Governor revising sentences of court-martial, but thought that this should only be done in cases where penalty of death had been imposed, leaving the Commandant of Militia to deal with minor cases. The Governor, however, decided in case of proceedings not involving death sentences to be confirming officer himself, and to have advantage of advice of the Minister of Defence. The Governor continues—

"The trial of the prisoners took place for the principal act which led to proclamation of martial law. Accused were represented by counsel, and were allowed to call witnesses. The Attorney-General gave it as his opinion that the circumstances fully justified trial by court-martial, that the proceedings were in order, and that the accused had had fair trial. Evidence was conclusive against the condemned men. I went most carefully into it, and prepared *précis* of the evidence against each individual prisoner for information of the Executive Council. On receipt of your telegram of yesterday's date, I requested the Prime Minister to be good enough to order the suspension of the executions which had been fixed for to-morrow pending further instructions from your lordship. He replied that he regretted that he could not authorise suspension of executions, which had been confirmed after full and deliberate consideration. I discussed the matter with him and explained that this decision would oblige me as Governor of the Colony to exercise prerogative of the Crown under the letters patent and to cancel the death warrant which I had signed. He quite recognised this, but said that, as a most important constitutional question was involved, he would feel obliged if I would give him written instructions. This I did, upon which he wrote me the following Minute:—'As your Excellency has thought it necessary to give instructions to suspend executions which were confirmed by Executive Council and appointed to be carried out on Friday next, I feel that it is impossible for me to continue in office as Prime Minister, and I beg to tender my resignation. My colleagues are unanimous in supporting me in what, under the present circumstances, appears to them most important constitutional question.' As your Lordship has only directed me to suspend operations in order to have my further observations, I replied to the Prime Minister as follows:—'It is with the greatest regret that I have received above Minute. I should feel much obliged if your colleagues and yourself will retain office whilst I am making further communication to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.' To this he has replied as follows:—'I have no wish to cause your Excellency inconvenience, and with my colleagues will retain office whilst further communication is being made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I would point out as, in my opinion, matter as affecting native population is most urgent I trust there will be no delay in receiving reply to your communication, I trust that with the additional facts contained in this telegram your Lordship will see your way to withdraw objection. I am afraid that very intense feeling will be excited in the Colony by my having suspended execution.'"

His Majesty's Government have considered that telegram, and have sent a reply as follows:—

"Your telegram March 29, No. 1, giving full information as to the procedure and circumstances of trial and the opinion of the Attorney-General thereupon and your own careful examination of the whole case and of the evidence against each individual prisoner and the conclusive manner in which the individual guilt of each prisoner was established, on which I doubt not any mitigating circumstances which might differentiate their guilt were considered, has received careful consideration of His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government have at no time had the intention to interfere with action of the responsible Government of Natal or to control Governor in exercise of prerogative. But your Ministers will, I feel sure, recognise that in all the circumstances now existing, and in view of the presence of British troops in the colony, His Majesty's Government are entitled and were in duty bound to obtain full and precise information in reference to these martial law cases, in regard to which an Act of Indemnity has ultimately to be assented to by the Crown. In the light of the information now furnished His Majesty's Government recognise that the decision of this grave matter rests in the hands of your Ministers and yourself.

"The manner in which you have placed the various aspects of this question before your Ministers from March 16 onwards has my approval; but I regret that you did not keep me informed by telegraph of the steps you were taking or that the telegram announcing the imminent execution of these twelve men did not contain the detailed information which has now been given in reply to my telegram of the 28th. It was this lack of information which necessitated my telegram."

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: May I ask at what stage of the proceedings which the noble Earl has just read His Majesty's Government intervened?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: They intervened on Wednesday, when they first received intimation of the whole matter.

House adjourned at Five o'clock to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 30*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

ROYAL COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, having returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—1, Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Act, 1906. 2, Army (Annual) Act, 1906.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz:—London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

North and South Shields Electric Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. Third Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

Carlisle Corporation Bill; North East Lincolnshire Water Bill; Cardiff Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further and better provision for the execution of the powers and duties of the Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate in Sheffield." [Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords.]

SHEFFIELD ASSAY OFFICE BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; Accrington (two); Acklington; Altrincham; Amberley; Ardwick (two); Atherton; Ault Hucknalt (two); Badgeworth; Barnet; Barrington (two); Biddlesden; Bordesley; Brindle Heath (two); Broomfield (two); Bury (two); Calverton; Capel (two); Castle Hedingham; Castlethorpe (two); Chatbur; Chorlton cum Hardy; Clapham (Sussex); Coberley; Colton; Coxhoe (two); Dunston (two); Dursley (two); Ellingham; Emery Down (two); Farnworth (two); Flamstead; Great Linford; Great Yeldham; Hackney; Hampstead; Hampton; Hanslope (two); Hardwycke (two); Harlesden; Haughton (three); Heath (two); Hetton le Hole (two); Heysham (two); Highworth; Horbling; Horbury Hornby with Farleton; Kewstoke cum Milton; Kingsdown Kingswood; King's Worthy; Lancaster (eight); Leamington; Littleborough (two); Little Hallingbury; Little Paxton (two); Llandegley Llowes (two); Loddington; Long Crendon; Longney; Longton (two); Maids Moreton (two); Maidstone; Maisey Hampton; Manchester (two); Middleham; Middleton (two); Mosley Common (two); Nacton; Newdigate (two); New Hey; Okewood; Old and New Shoreham; Overton (two); Penwortham; Rodborough; Rotherfield Peppard; Ryton; St. Giles, Oxford; St. Marylebone; St. Mary the Less, Durham (two); St. Nicholas, Durham; St. Thomas's, Pendleton (two); Scruton; Sevenhampton, Brockhampton, and Charlton Abbots; Sherburn (two); Slyne with Hest; Southrop; Stockton-on-Tees; Thame (two); Totteridge; Tuddenham St. Mary; Two Mile Hill; Upton; Upton Scudamore; Walkden (two); Weaste; Westleigh (two); Whatley; Wheathamstead; White Notley (two); Whittingham; Willesden (two); Witton Gilbert (two); Woodmansterne (two); Worle; Worming Hall (two); Woughton on the Green (two); and Wraxall; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH TEACHERS PENSION RULES, 1906.

Paper [presented 21st March]; to be printed. [No. 100.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow for the year ending September 30th, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 101.]

COURT OF PROBATE DIVISION (HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE) (IRELAND).

Annual Account presented of Receipts and Disbursements for the year ended December 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) (PERSONS COMMITTED).

Return ordered, "setting forth the names and addresses of all persons who have been committed to unlimited terms of imprisonment for Contempt of Court in Ireland from the 1st day of January, 1905, to the 28th day of February, 1906; the names of the Judges who issued the orders of attachment; the charges against the persons attached; and the duration of imprisonment in each case in which the order for attachment was executed (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 138, of Session 1905).

Name of prison.	Name of person committed.	Address.	Name of judge who issued order of attachment.	Charge against person attached.	Duration of imprisonment in each case in which the order for attachment was executed.

—(*Mr. Mooney.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Macedonian Reforms.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government adheres to the declaration of Lord Lansdowne that His Majesty's Government would suggest and urge more drastic reforms in Macedonia if those in force should prove inadequate.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Grey*): This declaration was originally made with special reference to the Murzteg programme, and since then the Financial Commission has been suggested and brought into operation. His Majesty's Government, of course, continue to reserve the right to suggest further reforms, if desirable and practicable.

The Colonial Office and the Natal Cabinet.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when Papers on the veto exercised upon Natal will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has no knowledge of any veto having been exercised upon Natal.

The Annual Report of Registrar-General for Ireland.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the issue of the Annual Report of the Registrar-General for Ireland was delayed from August to December owing to the existence of errors after the printing was completed, and that these errors had to be corrected by hand; and, if so, can he give any guarantee that the copies issued are all alike.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I regret that the issue of the Registrar-General's Annual Report of 1904, presented to Parliament in August last, was delayed to December, 1905 owing to errors having been made by the printers during the progress of the printing, which were discovered on the examination of the volumes when delivered to the Stationery Office. Some of the leaves of the Report were reprinted and inserted in the volumes in lieu of the corresponding leaves in which such mistakes had been detected, and a few of the errors were corrected by hand. I am assured that there is every reason to believe that the copies as issued to the public were accurate in every respect. I may add that arrangements have been made by the Stationery Office which will, I trust, prevent the recurrence of similar delay.

Postal Service at Chedworth, Gloucestershire.

MR. ESSEX (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will have the postal service for Chedworth, Gloucestershire, improved; whether he will arrange that a delivery of the first morning mails shall be made via Midland and South Western Junction Railway, thus expediting delivery upon that now offered by the present one given via Northleach, which town has no railway service, and that letters shall be despatched by a later hour than is at present the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have called for a report upon the circumstances of this case, and on its receipt I will acquaint the hon. Member with the result.

Ballina Post Office Staff.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state when the addition of two male clerks to the staff at the Ballina post office, county Mayo, as recommended by the last revision which was sanctioned in June last, will take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Before male officers could be appointed to the posts in question, it was necessary to find other places for the female sorting clerks and telegraphists by whom the posts were occupied, and this has caused some delay. I hope that one, at any rate, of the posts will be filled very shortly.

Irish National Teachers and the Results System.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education have received a copy of a resolution, unanimously passed by the Newry national teachers, in which it is stated that students in training at the time the results system was abolished should have their vested rights safeguarded; whether he has received a memorial referring to the same subject from the representatives of the elected boards of Newry; whether a deputation of the Irish teachers in a recent interview brought the matter under his notice; and whether, in view of all these facts, he will request the Commissioners of National Education to give to such of those who are in charge of schools, having an average of fifty or over, at least the initial salary of second grade V.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The resolution referred to has been received by the Commissioners of National Education, who inform me that on the introduction of the new system of payments in 1900, the vested interests of national school teachers, including those who, prior to 1900, had entered a training college for a course of training, were fully safeguarded. This privilege was not extended to persons in training who were not already national teachers and who had no vested interests in regard to emoluments. I have received the memorial referred to in the second part of the Question, and it is the case that the matter has also been brought to my notice by a deputation. I have already stated that the question of the teachers' salaries will receive consideration, and I am unable, at present, to make any more definite statement in the matter.

Sub-Land Commissioner Croasdaile.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the dissatisfaction created amongst the applicants for revision of rents by the decisions of Sub-Commissioner Croasdaile; if he will state the number of cases in which rents have been raised by this Commissioner; and whether a full inquiry will be made into the qualifications of Mr. Croasdaile before the question of his reappointment as an Assistant Commissioner is considered.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have already explained, in reply to similar Questions, that judicial rents are not fixed by individual Assistant Commissioners, but by duly constituted Sub-Commission Courts, which, as I am informed, are bound to hear the parties concerned, and to have regard to the interests of both the landlord and the tenant. The decisions of Sub-Commissions are judicial decisions, and a remedy is provided, in the statutory right of appeal, to parties who may be dissatisfied with the decisions given. The Land Commission do not think it desirable to discuss the result of the decisions given by Sub-Commission Courts. I have already stated that the qualifications of Assistant Commissioners are fully inquired into before reappointments are made.

Rifle Clubs and War Department Ammunition.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he has received a communication from the Belfast C. P. A. Rifle Club, requesting that they be permitted to purchase ammunition from the West York Regiment stationed at the Palace Barracks, Holywood; and whether, seeing that the ranges used by this club are situated close to the barracks, he will grant this application.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A letter has been received from this rifle club. The sale of ammunition by regiments for cash is not considered desirable. Ammunition can be obtained by rifle clubs from the Ordnance Department on payment, and they can obtain credit for fired and empty cartridge cases returned.

Army Officers—Forfeiture of Pension for Misconduct.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office have the power to forfeit the retired pay and pensions of officers who have left the Army for any misconduct, bad behaviour, or for any act or habit rendering an officer, in their opinion, unworthy to receive the pension, the War Office in such case, being the sole judge as to the retired officer's conduct.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Army Cnuncil have the power referred to, which is set forth in Article 606 of the Royal Warrant for Pay, Promotion, etc.

Promotion in the Royal Garrison Artillery.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Secretary of State for

War whether he is aware that owing to the reduction of the Royal Garrison Artillery there is a serious block of promotion among all ranks of officers; and whether any steps will be taken to enable senior officers to be transferred to other scientific corps.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the block in promotion of officers of the Royal Garrison Artillery is receiving careful consideration; it is, however, confined to the rank of major and upwards. There is no present intention of transferring officers to other corps.

Army Horses Bedding on Peat Moss.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the number, or approximate number, of Army horses in the United Kingdom bedded on peat moss; and whether the number is greater or less than was the case in 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The choice between using peat moss or straw for bedding rests with officers commanding units, and therefore there is no information available at the War Office to enable a reply to be given to this Question.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Police (Superannuation) Bill:—Mr. William Bridgeman; and had appointed in substitution: Viscount Helmsley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said, in rising to move the Second Reading of the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill, that owing to the chances of the ballot this matter had fallen into his hands; and it seemed as if it were a strange coincidence that one of the most important questions as affecting the trade unions of the country should be brought forward by a representative of the union which was first involved in the series of legal questions with which the measure dealt. He did not profess to be able to enter upon the maze of legal difficulties involved in this question, but he did, in addressing the House, speak authoritatively, knowing what the representatives of trade unions wanted, as representatives of the organised workers and as representatives coming from the trade organisations of the country. It would be noticed that the sub-title of the Bill, included associations other than trade unions; the Bill itself, however, did not contain any clause dealing with other associations. Hon. Members, like his friends from Ireland who were specially interested in associations which they claimed, to all intents and purposes, fulfilled the functions of trade unions, would be able to draft Amendments to meet their case. And the promoters of the Bill, by enlarging the scope of the title had left the way open for them to do so. The first clause of this Bill proposed to legalise peaceful picketing. The position they were now placed in was this: it was lawful to obtain and communicate information, but unlawful to watch and beset a house or place where a person resided or worked or carried on business. This, as he understood from the statement made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney-General, on Wednesday, was to be put right, by giving in law the right peacefully to persuade; in other words to legalise peaceful picketing. Under the law as it now stood every trade union, acting in the defence of workmen, and for the purpose of raising their *status*, as they had done for the past thirty years, might be bled to death by litigation. Yet that law was the common law which applied generally to all associations; and they must insist upon their original position that trade unions should be exempted from the law. He thought also that they had the hon. and learned Gentleman with them on the further question, namely, that under the

Property Defence Act, what would not be ground for an action if done by one person should not be ground for action if done by two or more persons. They understood that they had the hon. and learned Attorney-General with them entirely on that question, and consequently he did not intend at all to labour the point or to occupy the time of the House by discussing at any length the first two clauses of the Bill. He would mention, however, that the second clause ran—

> "An agreement or combination by two or more persons to do or procure to be done any act in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute shall not be ground for an action, if such act when committed by one person would not be ground for an action."

The third clause of the Bill was the clause which they had to discuss really and earnestly before the House on the present occasion. It read as follows—

> "An action shall not be brought against a trade union, or other association aforesaid, for the recovery of damage sustained by any person or persons by reason of the action of a member or members of such trade union or other association aforesaid."

The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney-General had recently expounded the law of conspiracy and informed the House as to the conditions with which it was fenced. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the law of conspiracy constituted one of those spaces on the juridical map to which the wary and prudent litigant gave as wide a berth as possible because it was a region of judge-made law; and when once the litigant was lost in that area he found it by no means easy to escape from it. The desire of trade unions was to keep out of that area altogether; they could not even be satisfied with a line of demarcation and notice boards to keep off the grass so far as accumulated funds were concerned. The law of agency was a continuation of judge-made law: it was useless for all practial purposes as a means to enable them to escape from one set of legal difficulties, to invite them to take another equally dangerous and to a considerable extent an unknown path, amidst legal subtleties. What was the objection to the restoring of their charter of freedom from collective liability for the wrongful acts of officers and members of trade unions? If there was no desire to injure and cripple the usefulness of trade unions and to deprive their members of the power they exercised to raise the standard of comfort and of living, and to defend the *status* of working men on questions of working hours, wages, and many mutual benefits, why should they not be permitted to leave a region entirely composed of these subtleties and return to their original position?

Mr. Justice Wills, on December 19th, 1902, in addressing the jury, said—

> "Now let me tell you what is legal with regard to picketing. A material thing to call your attention to is this Act of Parliament which deals with matters of this kind—it is the Act of 1875 the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act. It is the Act of Parliament which legalised strikes, and which I think Mr. Justice Cave described as "the charter of the working man," in matters of this kind. Of course, it was of immense advantage to them. It may have been a concession by Parliament of what was right, but I mean it was an immense step in advance for them to have their action of striking at all legalised."

He had been deeply interested on many occasions in reading and listening to statements by those who composed the Royal Commission of 1869, and he thought they had no greater authority to-day who could speak on that matter than Mr. Frederick Harrison. What did he say? He said—

> "I drafted the Minority Report of the Royal Commission of 1869 which led to the Act of 1871. When it was passing through Parliament I was consulted as to its being regarded as a just settlement. In the Taff Vale case Lord Macnaghten cited the Minority Report, referring to me by name. I think he entirely misunderstood both me and the Report in claiming any of us as admitting the liability of trade unions to an action of tort. Whilst in 1901 all the Lords held that a registered trade union was liable to an action in tort, Lord Lindley and Lord Macnaghten laid it down that any trade union was so liable, whether registered or not, and the Lord Chancellor seemed to agree. Those learned Lords may so declare their opinion, but they have not the slightest right to claim our Minority Report as admitting such doctrine. The words of the Act of 1871 were not taken from any Report of 1869; and, of course, nothing in that Report could justify a special interpretation of that Act of two years later. Lord Macnaghten quotes me as approving the liability of a trade unionist for his own wrong-doing, and infers that this admission includes the same liability of the union as a whole. I neither said nor accept anything of the kind. I said then, as I say now, that it is quite right that a member of any union should be liable

for his acts, whether criminal or tortious; but it is a totally different thing to say that a loose association of which he is a member shall be collectively liable for his acts. . . . Lord Macnaghten quoted the words of the Minority Report as to accepting the liability of every person 'in respect of any damage occasioned through the Act or default of the person so sued.' Nothing of the kind 'was intended' either by myself or colleagues on the Commission, nor by the Government when they passed the Act of 1871. Nothing of the kind was possible, even if it had been intended. The words of the Royal Commission Report said, 'All questions of crime apart, the objects at which they (the unions) aim, the rights which they claim, and the liabilities which they incur are, for the most part, it seems to us, such as courts of law should neither enforce, nor modify, nor annul. They should rest entirely on consent.'"

The new Home Secretary, in bringing in the Bill, supported the opinion expressed by the Commission, and based the Government measure upon it. In fact, at the time of the passing of the Trade Union Act of 1871, it was not possible to sue a trade union collectively in tort, under the existing rules of common law. This rule of law remained in force for fourteen years after the Royal Commission Report of 1869, and long after the labour legislation of 1871 and 1875. It was not until 1883 that under the Judicature Acts of 1881 the judges issued new rules of procedure (General Order No. 16, of 1883, Rule 9), which authorised a court to name representative defendants to defend actions against collective bodies. The Minority Report of 1869 urged strongly that the unions should be left "unable to sue or to be sued." While it was true that no one of the Labour Acts had exempted trade unions from civil liability to damages in express terms, it was equally true no Act had declared it either in words or by inference. It was certain that for thirty years down to the year 1901 no trade union by name had been cast in damages. If it had been possible to do so large employers and powerful bodies of employees would have taken the opportunity of proceeding as far as the law allowed, or was thought to be allowed. Even lawyers held the opinion that no action in tort would lie against a trade union as defendant. But in 1901 a change of opinion set in. In "The Duke of Bedford *v.* Ellis" the House of Lords overruled a decision of the Court of Appeal that the general order of 1883 did not apply to a trade union. And, under the presidency of one who had shaken down so many doctrines of accepted law, the Lords delivered the Taff Vale judgment, which had practically placed all trades unions at the mercy of their opponents in any trade dispute. The Taff Vale judgment was a creation of new law, inasmuch as it never previously existed in either statute law or decision of any Court. They were told that the decision of the Lords rested on principle, but that was as new as the new law it created. Consequently they arrived at this point, from all persons who had spoken in any sense authoritatively, with regard to the intention of those who desired to give, and did give to trade unions, a legal existence, also gave it, with a limited and restricted power; they could not sue or be sued. He ventured to say that if injury to trade unions was not desired, or desirable, on the part of employers, what was the good of having the power to sue? It was not only the clear intention of the framers of the Act, but the Act of 1871 actually did leave to trade unions the immunity which for thirty years they had enjoyed. They did not want any specially created privilege, but merely asked to be restored to the original position of immunity. They asked for an equality before the law. It was impossible for any useful purpose to give trade organisations power of corporation. If they had any use for such power of corporation it would be to become their own employers. The fallacy of the conclusion that collective responsibility on the part of unions was, or could be, an effective means and incentive to more cautious action was entirely without foundation. Who had suffered most during the past five years of abundance of trade union litigation? Not the officials and leaders as a rule, but the rank and file of the members, many of whom knew nothing of the actual merits of the action brought against whom in their collective capacity. In the decision given by Lord Davey in Allen *v.* Flood, Lord Davey said—

"An employer may discharge a workman (with whom he has no contract), or may refuse to employ one from the most mistaken, capricious, malicious, or morally reprehensible motives that can be conceived; but the workman has no right of action against him. It seems to me strange to say that the principal who does the act is under no liability, but the accessory who has advised him to do so, without any wrongful act, is under liability."

Where did equality at present come in? A railwayman some time ago declined to submit to what he thought were unfair conditions imposed upon him. He worked out his notice and left that company. He got employment with another company in the same city, and gave general satisfaction. At the end of a fortnight's trial, he was satisfied with the work himself, but, before he could be taken on the permanent staff as was intended, he was requested to go to the other railway company (his previous employers) and get a note of reference of discharge. He carried the letter himself to his new employing company, with the result that on the next day he was told his services were no longer required. The case was taken before the Recorder, who refused to make an order to produce the letter, and dismissed the case. The refusal to produce the letter was based on the ground that it was private, yet in the Taff Vale case the men had to lay every letter before the Court. It was not his intention further to occupy the time of the House. But as one who represented one of the largest industrial constituencies in this country, a constituency which was the pioneer of trade organisation in this country, and had very strong feelings upon this particular question—a question which was made one of the most prominent questions at the recent election; he had been sent to Parliament to say distinctly that they wanted to go back exactly to the position in which they were originally placed, namely, of entire immunity from the law. His colleagues in this House agreed with him that, so far as trade union funds were concerned, they would not be satisfied until they were entirely exempt from the attacks of those who had always opposed them. There was not at the present time an employer who had the best wishes of the trade unions at heart who desired to persecute the trade unions by atacking their funds. That being so, trade unions held that they should get back to the position which they had originally occupied. It was not a matter of privilege but a matter of right which he asked the House now to accede to. He moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) said that although he had always held views on this immensely important industrial question which were not those held by gentlemen below the gangway, the latter must in justice recognise that he was returned to this House by a very large working-class constituency on no false pretence. He was not present to tell the House that there was some ambiguity about the pledges that were given at the time of the general election. He was asked in his constituency, and there was no ambiguity about the question, whether or not he would vote, not for a general Bill to introduce some sort of amendment into the trade union law, but for the Labour Bill, and he believed there was hardly an hon. Member who was not asked in the same unequivocal and explicit manner if he was in favour of the Bill. He replied, with a reluctance which the House would easily appreciate, for he too was so anxious to get into the House of Commons, that he was not able to support that Bill, and therefore would vote against it. Sincerely and honestly believing as the Labour Members did, and being aware of the explicit pledges given by hon. Gentlemen opposite, they might well have been excused if they had, during the speech of the Attorney-General, quoted that simple and beautiful expression, "Enough of this foolery." He did not represent merely the interests of organised labour, but also, in common with many other Members of the House, that large body of working men not members of a trade union, and he would point out that not merely was there no presumption that on this point that hon. Gentlemen below the gangway represented unorganised labour, but the very opposite presumption held. He had never heard that any petition was presented to the House asking that working men who belonged to no trade union might be subjected to "peaceful persuasion" or that their dwelling houses might be beset by a hundred men to "give them information." It was not until they took the conspiracy clause and the peaceful persuasion clause together that they were face to face with the full objectionableness of this Bill. They must take the two together. They were asked to permit a hundred men to go round to the house of a man who wished to exercise the common law right in this country to sell his labour where and when he chose, and to "advise" him or "peacefully persuade" him not to work. If "peaceful persuasion" was the real object, why did they want a hundred men to do it? He knew of no one who was more peaceful than the Member for Merthyr, and he was sure no man could be more persuasive. The Attorney-General would agree with that. If he (Mr. Smith) were a man who was wishful to dispose of his labour as he chose, although the Member for Merthyr might not persuade him to break a contract, still if the hon. Member came with fifty other peaceful persuaders to the house where he and his wife lived he thought he would be much more likely to yield to persuasion than if the hon. Gentleman came by himself. They were told that another object was in order that information should be given. Was it more convenient that information should be given by fifty men than by one man? Even in this House it was recognised that as a general principle it was more convenient that one Member should address the House at one time. The root principle was the question whether trade unions ever did in fact enjoy that exceptional provision which was now claimed for them with perfect sincerity by hon. Gentleman below the gangway. It was that unfounded belief which led the vast majority of hon. Gentlemen opposite to agree to support this Bill when it was brought before Parliament. The opinion of any man who was not a lawyer was not worth a brass farthing——

Mr. CROOKS: That is good trade unionism.

Mr. F. E. SMITH: Yes, good trade unionism, and my profession are trade unionists, but we do not ask hon. Gentlemen below the gangway to enable us to "peacefully persuade" in large numbers in the chambers of competitors. What he meant to say was that only a lawyer's opinion possessed value, not upon the general question of social policy underlying this difficult subject, but on the question whether before 1871 trade unions enjoyed immunity. He did not ask the House to take his opinion on that matter—though at another time and elsewhere he would be very pleased to give it—but to take the words of as great a lawyer as the present Attorney-General, who quite recently had assented to the view that historically there was no foundation for that argument. A very distinguished Liberal lawyer, Mr. Cohen, had pronounced an opinion upon the point coinciding in every detail with that of the Attorney-General. The hon. Member below the gangway had said that before the year 1871 there was a complete immunity for the funds of trade unions. His answer was that before the year 1871 the theory of the English law knew no such immunity. Before that year a trade union was merely an aggregation of individuals, and if all those individuals were made parties in an action of tort and cast in damages all such property as they possessed could be taken in satisfaction, including the trade union property. It was difficult, perhaps, to get at their property, but the difficulty was a physical, not a legal one. Since the Judicature Act and the order of 1883 a representative action had become possible on the common law side. The law was therefore clear that a trade union could be properly sued in representative action, and their funds made liable for any damages in which they might be cast. No body of men in this country to-day was able to establish a claim of immunity such as was put forward by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. They had been told repeatedly in the course of the debate that employers could get their damages from the actual wrongdoers, but he would remind the House that in 99 cases out of 100 the men from whom they were told they could get damages were men of straw. He ventured to address to the Labour Members a clear and definite question raising an issue which at least was an issue of principle: were they prepared to extend to associations of employers the same immunity which they asked the House to grant to the trade unions? [LABOUR cries of "Yes."] Were they prepared to say that if an association of employers caused damage to their union to the amount of £10,000 the remedy of members of the union should be limited to an agent with £100 a year—a man of straw from whom they could not get a farthing? He did not gather that there was an entire unanimity in the answer from the Labour benches. [Cries of "Yes."] The words of the Bill just admitted of that construction, but it was by no means clear that under the *eiusdem generis* rule the expression "similar associations" might not be construed to mean associations closely analogous to trade unions, that was to say, of employees only. A suggestion had been made from below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House that the reason why trade unions ought to have this privilege was that they were to-day unable to sue. He would ask a question which brought the matter back to a very narrow compass. If trade unionists were given the right to sue would they abandon the claim they were now making? [Cries of "We don't want it."] That was at least an honest answer. They did not want the right to sue, but that being the case they should not allow without protest the argument to be advanced that they desired this measure because they did not possess the right to sue. He wished to say a word in conclusion on the position of the Government. The Attorney-General was one of the few men in the House with whom he had the good fortune to be in thorough agreement on the great moral questions underlying this proposal. In introducing the Government measure the Attorney-General said—

> "You may in your wish to prevent injustice being inflicted on trade unions create injustice against individuals who are members of the community."

But if the Government were going to leave the question to the House no one was under the slightest misapprehension as to what the House would do. Therefore, if the Government were going to leave it to the House they were going, on their own admission, to "create injustice against individuals who are members of the community." The Attorney-General admitted that "you are proposing class privileges." That was what the Government was going to do if it left the question to the House. They were going to create a privilege for the proletariat. They were going to remove from the unions and particularly from the agents, the sense of responsibility. He would much rather give the vote which the Labour Members were going to give, because they honestly believed in the principle that underlay the Bill, than the vote which would be given by the members of the Treasury Bench, for a measure which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said was wrong. They were going to vote for a measure of which the Attorney-General had spoken in language which hon. Gentlemen below the gangway would not soon forget, whatever the fate of this measure might be. Let them not hear from benches opposite, or at least from the Treasury Bench, any more talk of opportunism or political cowardice. The Opposition would be voting for what they believed to be right, although it would not do them political harm in the country. They were incurring this risk because they thought it was right, but the front Ministerial Bench were doing what they believed to be wrong because they thought it would do them political good. At last they had got the most powerful Government of modern times in the open, and after all the colossus had feet of clay. The House, the Party, and the country asked the Government for a lead, and the Government put up the Attorney to say that they were better at following. Their policy was:

> "Willing to wound and yet afraid to strike,
> Just hint a sneer, and hesitate dislike."

He congratulated the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil upon the captures he had made on the Front Bench. He might say, "The Treasury Bench is my wash-pot and over the Attorney-General have I cast my shoe." He complimented the hon. Member upon his victory. He was entitled to say as he looked at each individual victim on that bench: "A poor thing, but mine own." The Opposition, whether the result was a political advantage or a political misfortune, at least at a time of unexampled stress to every man who was anxious to win his way into the House of Commons, said that they would vote against this measure. But the occupants of the Government Benches were voting for this Bill against their deliberately formed and twice repeated convictions because they dared not face a mutiny which they could not quell—an example which, whether it proved more favourable to their advancement at the polls, would not tend to raise the standard of public morality either in the country or in this House.

*MR. HORRIDGE (Manchester ,E.) said that whatever doubt there might be in the minds of other hon. Members as to the mandate which this House received there could be no doubt as to the mandate he received from his constituency upon this question. The question was put to him, "Will you or will you not support the Bill which passed the Second Reading last year?" He knew what he was doing when he said he would support the Bill. He supported this Bill to-day not only because he gave that pledge, but because he believed it to be a right, a true, and a politic Bill to support. He was not ashamed to use the word "politic," because he thought that what this House had got to do as a body and not as a Party was to see that their legislation was politic in the sense of dealing with the great problems with which they were faced. He could not help noticing with some curiosity the way in which the applause which greeted the brilliant utterances of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down to some extent ceased when he said that the microscopic band of stalwarts with whom he sat had told their constituents that they would vote against the Bill, and he was curious to see how many even of that small body would have the courage to go into the lobby against this measure. The hon. and learned Member had had the boldness to ask the House to reject this Bill, but the extraordinary thing about it was that he had not studied it. Had he done so he would have found that the Bill extended the same privileges to the masters' associations as to the men's unions. When they listened to brilliant utterances of the kind delivered by the hon. and learned Gentleman they must sometimes say to themselves, would that there was a little more Christian charity and less brilliancy, and that there was a little more care on the part of Members in dealing with a Bill to which they were opposed. As he read the clause which had been most debated in the Bill, it applied equally to associations of men and of masters. Labour Members asked for no privileges. What they asked for was that when there were exceptional circumstances, whether those exceptional circumstances were on the masters' side or on the men's side, this House should deal with the question from a practical and sensible point of view.

MR. F. E. SMITH said he did not, of course, suggest for a moment that the words used in the section were words incapable of including an association of employers. The only privileges given in the Bill to an association of employers, however, were to do things which under no conceivable circumstances did they desire to do.

MR. HORRIDGE said he merely wished to point out that the third clause applied equally to associations of masters and associations of men, and as the hon. and learned Gentleman had asked the Labour Members whether they were prepared to extend the same privileges to the masters as to the men he said it was already in the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman should at least have had the courtesy to read the Bill before attacking it. His hon. and learned friend seemed to think that there was some magic force in the fact that this particular Clause 3 was not in the previous Act of Parliament. Of course, if it had been, it would not be required in this Bill. They had a clause about picketing in the Act of 1859, and it was considered to be the law until the Trade Union Act was passed by a Tory Government in 1875. What was the argument on the other side?

The argument against picketing was that it meant the legalisation of 100 people instead of one. But the Bill did not deal with one man or with 100 men. All it did was to make the action lawful so long as it was done peacefully. It was not lawful if it was not done peacefully, and it was begging the question to say that, because a thing which was right in itself might be abused, the House should not sanction it. The opposition to the clause was past praying for, and, whether it was the Government Bill or the present Bill, he believed the House would accept by an overwhelming majority this alteration of the law. With regard to the clause which defined the law of conspiracy he was going to let the House into one of the secrets of the law. When they wanted to get any evidence in a case, and when they did not know how to get that evidence in any other way, they got up a conspiracy count. The result was that everything Mrs. Smith said to Mrs. Jones was admissible as evidence. He thought that if the Bill defined that law in a clear and simple manner a great service would be done to the law of the country. This very clause was in the Act of 1875, but it only applied to criminal proceedings. He failed to see any reason at all for that limitation, and this Bill proposed that the same law should apply to a civil action as well. Could they have a simpler or more useful reform in the law ? He could not take the view which was put by the Attorney-General the other day. The question of whether there was any evidence of agency might be a question for the judge, but the question of whether those who were picketing were picketing as agents or not would on every occasion be submitted to a special jury of employers. As to the main clause in the present Bill, he preferred it to the corresponding clause in the Bill of the Government. He had had some experience of these cases on behalf of both the masters and the men, and he said without hesitation that the tribunal before which they came was never a fair tribunal. If any such provision as that mentioned in the speech of the Attorney-General the other day were to be put into a Bill of this kind it could only be put in side by side with a reform of the jury law of this country. He did not like the clause in the Government Bill: it was not workable. He liked the clause in the Bill now before the House because it was a clear, simple, and practical form of raising the issue. What was the issue in this matter ? He did not care whether he could show that in law there was a right to do it before. From 1871 to 1892 it was universally regarded as the position of trade unions—and that position existed without any damage to the welfare of the country. They were, therefore, speaking from experience in advocating this amendment of the law. Moreover, they were not putting in the clause in the dark, because for twenty years, from 1871 to 1892 it was the law, and the trade unions of the country did not abuse the position. There were no bodies of men to whom the country owed more than to the trade unions. They had turned warfare, which was always a terrible thing, whether it were national, civil, or domestic, into as peaceful a groove as was possible, and every large employer of labour who had experience of these matters would say that he would rather deal with a trade union than with anybody else. It was idle as an argument to say that, because they could not get their damages out of people who happened to be poor, therefore they should get them from rich funds which were never intended for that purpose. It happened daily that people who had done wrong were proceeded against, and that damages could not be got from them because they were poor; but that was no reason why they should hit somebody else. Under this Bill the liability of the individual would remain, and every member of the organisation would be liable for his actions if they were wrong. Then there was the argument that the funds could be divided as between the war fund and the benefit fund. He had a great objection to that. The trade unions all said that would not work, and he understood why. It was because they must either have it with the power to transfer the funds backwards and forwards or without. If without, then the inducement to the union would be to use the money allotted to warlike purposes for a strike; if with, they could transfer the money from the war fund the minute before a strike, and transfer it back afterwards. That was an impolitic thing to suggest and it was a thing which the trade union leaders themselves were not in favour of. This was a measure of justice and he objected to the term "privileged class."

MR. F. E. SMITH: The Attorney-General said so.

MR. HORRIDGE said he objected to the phrase all the same, and he objected to it all the more because the limitation of the law of agency to a special class as proposed in the Government Bill would have exactly the same effect. The Bill dealt with the necessities of a particular case in a proper, statesmanlike manner. He preferred this Bill to that of the Government, he had pledged himself to vote for it, he believed it to be a right, prudent, and practical measure; and he hoped that the House, which was elected on more democratic principles than any Parliament of the past, would register its vote in favour of what he believed to be a truly sound democratic measure.

MR. E. EDWARDS (Hanley) said that the hon. Member for East Manchester had referred to the suggestion that there might be a division of the funds of a trade union between the fighting contributions and the benefit contributions. Speaking for a large society he wished to say that they had no fund except what was called a war fund. That intensified their anxiety to see this Bill passed. Their fund was not so much a war fund as a law fund, and a large part of their resources had been used to find out what the law was. He wished to associate himself with the views of his trade union friends. He thought the necessity for such a Bill would be emphasised by the speech of the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool. Previous speakers on the Government Benches had made special reference to the fact that while this was a trade union disputes Bill there were thousands of men and women engaged in industries who were not members of the trade unions. He wanted to say on behalf of the great societies of workmen that, though this question had arisen acutely in those days, there appeared to be at present much more friendly and agreeable relations between large employers of labour and representative workmen than at any period during the last thirty years. He himself was associated with a great industry in which both employers and employed tried to obviate strikes. It would not be denied here or outside that no institutions had conferred greater benefits on the community than the trade unions of this country. The trade unions in carrying on their work were not unmindful of the benefits which those in the industrial community who were not trade unionists received as the result of the action of the unions. The wages of workmen stood relatively 40 per cent. higher than in the year 1888, and the workmen who were not members of the unions shared in the advantages. When hon. Members spoke of the iniquities of the unions he would point out that so far in their operations the unions had done more to raise the *status* of non-union men in all classes of labour than any other societies in the kingdom. The hon. Member who opposed the Bill had said that there was no ambiguity about his position as he had stated to the electors what would be his line of action in regard to the Bill. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that there was no ambiguity about the position of the supporters of the Bill. They had endeavoured to make this question clear before the great industrial communities. If he rightly understood the feeling of this House there was a pretty general agreement on the question. There was a desire on the part of the majority that the question should be settled on fair and equitable lines. He observed that the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool—he supposed it was a perfectly legitimate thing for the hon. Member to do—sought to place the position of the Government in a somewhat unenviable light. If he understood the position of the Government as reflected in the speech of the hon. and learned the Attorney-General, it was that on this main Question of Clause 3, the decision was to be left to the judgment of the House. He did not know that there was anything unfair in that. It might be, in the minds of some people like the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, a proper thing to take advantage of the moment to place the Government in an unenviable position in regard to their decision as to Clause 3. He was not in the position, as a lawyer, to defend a great constitutional question, but to his mind that position was a most honourable one. This new House had been returned to reflect the wishes of the constituencies at the recent election, and he could not conceive a more fitting subject for the Government to leave to the Members of this new

House to express their uninfluenced opinion upon than the provisions contained in this clause. Nobody knew better than the Government themselves that this was one of the questions which must be settled on the lines of the Bill before the House. It was manifest that in a great constitutional country like this it was impossible that these great organisations should continue long without being put on an equitable basis in relation to the rest of the community. If a large conciliation board controlling the interests of a great industry came to a decision, and against that decision a section of the workmen rebelled, as the law stood now it was within the right of the employers to put the workmen into court for fourteen days wages for ceasing work without giving proper notice, and in addition to that they could take the great society which was dealing with the problem before the courts and get damages from it. But if the employers declined to agree to the decision of their board the workman could not sue them to get damages. This was manifestly unfair. Workmen and employers should be placed in exactly the same position. He wished especially to impress upon the House that trade unions should not be hampered in their work by any law which was so ambiguous, so difficult to understand, and so uncertain as the present law. To his mind one of the duties of the House was to make the law as between workmen and employers so easy and plain that the ordinary man could understand what it meant. His objection to Clause 3 of the Government's Bill was that it contained provisions of a character that would lead to constant friction and litigation between great societies and employers. For these reasons he hoped the House would unanimously endorse the Bill now before it.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he wished to present, in as few words as possible, the views which the Irish Party took in regard to the Bill before the House. This was the third time on which this Bill had been brought to a division, and on the two previous occasions every Irish Member present had voted for the Second Reading. Indeed, on the very last occasion, fifty Irish Members who had crossed to Dublin to attend a National Convention, recrossed the Channel the following night in order to take part in the division. Last year, when this Bill went before the Grand Committee on Law, every Irish Member who was on that Committee voted in every division against any Amendment to the Bill. That being so, the position of the Irish Members was perfectly clear. They would give this Bill, as on the two previous occasions, their united and unqualified support. Their reason for doing so was equally clear. They recognised that they had in the Labour Party in this House, and in the country, a body of men friendly towards the political aspirations and social needs of Ireland; and they were glad to co-operate with them in any measure for the benefit of the classes they represented whose desire was to obtain conditions for a higher and better state of existence than they could enjoy at present. As with the two previous Bills, so with this, they commanded the support of the Irish Party on its merits. He had listened to all the debates, and although it might be presumptious on his part, he did not hesitate to say that the arguments against this Bill, and all other measures of a like nature, were nothing but a mass of specious special pleading which was refuted by the notorious facts and circumstances of the case. One of the proposals of the Bill was to sweep away the doctrine of conspiracy in the matter of trade disputes. That doctrine of law had worked more practical evil than almost any other and had been more one-sided in its application. However it might be regarded by the judges or however it might be looked upon as a legal theory, he believed that it had been constantly used as an engine of oppression in the hands of the rich against the poor, in the hands of the classes against the masses, in the hands of the employer against the employee. It had always confounded the innocent with the guilty, and had turned a laudable public movement into a series of crimes against society and the State. Moreover, he thought it would be admitted, even by lawyers, that no greater charge could be brought against a law than that it was uncertain. Anyone who knew anything about the law of conspiracy would acknowledge that. He had heard the law of conspiracy defined in Ireland as a means of punishing anybody whom the Judge did not like. This uncertainty had become proverbial. A few years ago the House of Lords decided the famous case of Allen *v.* Flood; and two years afterwards the same tribunal had before it the case of Quinn *v.* Leatham in which the same considerations seemed, to most people outside the Courts, to be involved; but that same Court upset all that had been decided in the case of Allen *v.* Flood. A result like that seemed to him to be a snare and a nuisance, as dangerous to the individual as it was to public liberty; and the only thing to do was to sweep it away. In face of the undeniable facts, it was to him very strange that this discussion had taken place at all. He was one of those who took it for granted that everything proposed to be legalised by this Bill was actually the law until 1900—or for a period of a quarter of a century. Picketing was supposed to be legalised by the Act of 1875. The funds of trade unions were supposed to be protected by the Act of 1875. It was now too late for hon. Gentlemen to say that the case should not be reopened. He would suggest to hon. Gentlemen who were trying to oppose the Bill and who would move wrecking Amendments that they were doing a dangerous thing. Because, when these concessions were made in 1875, it was after a time when acts of violence had been committed on a large scale; and the people might come to the conclusion that what was refused to be conceded to the masses in a time of peace was conceded to them in a time of war. When he said that the Irish Members intended to support every line of this Bill, he was bound, at the same time, to express his regret on their behalf that it did not contain provisions to cover other cases than trade disputes. The title of the Bill rendered it capable of being extended, and justified Irish Members in moving Amendments to cover cases with which they were familiar. During the last quarter of a century the Irish people had been engaged in what he might call, without exaggeration, a struggle for their lives and for a bare living. The unreformed Land Court of Ireland, and even the reformed Land Court, permitted them to be robbed of their property, driven out of the country or into the workhouses, and even exterminated by the Irish landlords. To protect themselves they formed combinations for the purpose of defeating these efforts of the landlord class. These associations were as much public associations as any trade union. Their objects were stated upon public platforms, and none of them had ever been assailed as in any way illegal, immoral, or unworthy. Generally speaking, the programmes of these associations embraced objects which had actually been translated into Acts of Parliament, especially into the last great Irish Land Act of 1903, which made it certain that in a comparatively short period of time landlordism would be swept out of existence altogether. Accompanying this agitation some persons were alleged to have committed crimes. It was open to the Government to have punished those people, but instead of trying to punish them the Government, whether it was Liberal or Unionist, tried to get at people who had done no wrong at all, but who were associated together for the purpose of procuring the very reforms which Parliament had now sanctioned. He would content himself with one illustration. It was absolutely necessary that a large property in the west of Ireland—the De Freyne estate—should in the interests of the people be bought out under the Land Act of 1903. The association organised by the people sympathised with that view and determined to carry it out, and it had been carried out, but before Lord De Freyne consented to sell his estate to his tenants he brought civil actions against thirty people for conspiracy, only four or five of whom had said a single word or done a single act in connection with the sale of the estate. The action was settled, but if it had gone on and had succeeded, as it probably would have done if the law of conspiracy had been interpreted in the same way as it generally was, not only would the four or five people who had spoken or done something in reference to the transactions on that estate have been punished, but twenty-seven other people who never did anything at all, but who were merchants of Dublin, and who only learned of the transactions by seeing their names on a writ, would have been equally punished, under this law of conspiracy which the House was now seeking to get rid of in the case of trade unions. There was moreover a special grievance of which men in Ireland had to complain. If a man was sued in this country civilly in a trade dispute he had the protection of a special jury, but in Ireland in 1887 a perpetual act was passed under which it was possible for any Government, at any moment to appoint two men as magistrates, who would be removable at the pleasure of the Government, to decide upon any question of conspiracy. They might not even be lawyers. If the trade unions had a grievance the tenantry of Ireland had a larger grievance. The Irish Members would avail themselves of the title of the Bill which spoke of other than trade disputes to move Amendments, and he was sure they would have the hearty and unanimous support which they now extended towards the Bill reciprocated by the Labour Members and the other supporters of the measure.

*MR. HENRY (Shropshire, Wellington) said he recognised that a large measure of the support he obtained at the last election was due to the fact that he had pledged himself to support the Trade Disputes Bill on the lines introduced in 1903. In the division which he had the honour to represent the electorate was composed largely of workers representative of some of the leading industries of the country, and their views as regards this measure might be regarded as those generally prevailing. Objection seemed to be raised to the Bill now before the House chiefly on the ground that its provisions were opposed to existing legal doctrines. He ventured the opinion that the conditions of trade unions required distinct and separate legislation. Their object was distinct from that of other associations, and he felt sure that this measure would largely tend to place them on a firmer basis. Coming as he did in contact with many employers of labour not only in this country, but on the Continent and in the United States, he found it to be generally admitted that trade unions well conducted on equitable lines were a source of strength and the means of bringing about a greater degree of friendship between employers and employed, thereby facilitating, in no small measure, the industrial prosperity of this and other countries. With regard to the manner in which trade unions were conducted in this country—this House had a special opportunity of judging that the leaders were well selected, that they were well adapted for leading men in a just and moderate path, and that they desired equal justice to employer and employed. It had been suggested in the course of the debate that the funds of associations of employers under this Bill would be liable to attack, while those of the men's organisations would be immune, but his experience was that there would be little danger to the employers, as their funds were really not available; they were mostly small, raised in order to provide lunches at the monthly meetings when their policy was discussed and arranged. This Parliament would have to consider the necessity of some measure for bringing men back to the land and relieving the congestion of the cities and urban districts, but he ventured to think that until the agricultural labourer recognised the importance of combination and mutual protection, and adopted a system of trade unionism, no scheme, however well founded, would lead to the desired result. He supported this measure because he was confident it would bring about a sense of satisfaction and security where disquietude and discontent now prevailed, and that it would tend to help and forward our industrial and commercial welfare.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) congratulated the hon. Member for the Wellington Division on his maiden speech, and said he was very much in accord with him. Of course he was not a Labour Member, but he was an agricultural representative and had taken a great deal of interest in this Bill. He was bound to say that he preferred the Bill promoted by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway to the Bill introduced by the Government a few days ago. The Government Bill seemed to him to be, in a Parliamentary sense, a quibble. The Government were running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. Their Bill was full of barbed wire entanglements, and no ordinary man could understand it. The Bill promoted by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway was perfectly plain, and the House knew what the hon. Gentleman wanted. The Government during the election had given a good many promises which were now maturing. That was their affair. They had laid down the wine and they must drink it. They had made their bed and must lie on it. He was glad he had not to do so.

MR. DOBSON (Plymouth) declared that nine-tenths of the hon. Members on his side of the House who represented large constituencies were steeped to the lips in pledges to vote for this Bill. He considered it fortunate that the fortunes of the ballot had enabled this Bill to be brought in at a time when it was extremely desirable that the Government should know the real extent of the feeling of the majority of Members of the House, and when they could redeem their promises. This Bill differed very materially in one respect from the Government measure in the clause which gave immunity to the executive officials of trade unions. That provision, in his opinion, was very just, because it would put them on a perfect equality with the employers' association. No doubt other hon. Members had received a pamphlet from the Mining Association of Great Britain in regard to this Bill. In it reference was made to the observations of Mr. Justice Farwell in the Taff Vale case against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. The learned Judge said—

> "If the contention of the defendant society is well founded, the legislature has authorised the creation of numerous bodies of men capable of owning great wealth, and of acting by agents with absolutely no responsibility for the wrongs they may do to other persons by the use of that wealth and the employment of those agents."

He maintained that these words, with the exception of the four words, "the legislature has authorised" absolutely expressed the case in regard not to trade unions but with regard to the masters themselves. It was well known that the masters' associations possessed such power as the men never had and never could possess by reason of the difference in the nature of the two classes of organisation. With regard to the masters the situation was a simple one. They had no need to federate or to incorporate themselves in any shape or form. But trade unions were bound to do so, because their funds, although subscribed in sixpences or shillings, amounted in the aggregate to many millions of pounds, and it was absolutely necessary that they should be protected by the appointment of a proper board of management or executive. When the masters resolved to form themselves into an association they had no necessity to federate; they did not accumulate funds, because whenever cash was required cheques were at once forthcoming for £50, or £100 or even £1,000 at a time. And, not being federated, there was no one who could be shot at, or against whom an action would lie. In the course of the business with which he was connected he had had to deal with many so-called merchants' and manufacturers' associations, and when he wanted to purchase goods at a reduced price he had been told over and over again by members of such associations that slack as trade was, and desirous as they were of picking up orders, they could not possibly accept his terms, because it would expose them to a heavy monetary penalty—even up to £200. They went on to explain to him that in conjunction with a number of manufacturers they had entered into a bond by which they became liable to this penalty if they broke the rules of the association. No doubt they had a perfect right to enter into these agreements if they chose, but he gathered from speeches made in that House that while individual action was legal, it became a conspiracy when two or three men joined; and he wanted to know why merchants should be allowed thus to conspire to prevent him having the full benefit of an unprotected trade. These men conspired not only to keep up prices of goods, but also to keep down the prices of labour, to maintain long working hours, and to fight any provisions which the Government in its wisdom might make for the regulation of their trade. Yet the working men who might feel that they were injured by the action of these men had no opportunity of taking action against them.

He supported this Bill with great heartiness, because it would place workmen on an absolute equality with their employers. It did not make them absolutely immune from the law, and so far as he knew the Labour leaders never had claimed or even desired such immunity. They said that if a man broke the law he should be made responsible for it, but that the funds subscribed for totally different purposes, for sickness and old-age pensions, etc., should not be liable. Unless the Government accepted this Bill the agitation would continue until working men had secured what they wanted. He asked the Government not to make two bites at the cherry; not to place themselves in opposition to the justly expressed wishes of the representatives of the trade unions; they might with their majority throw out the Bill, but it would mean the commencement of a fresh era of agitation which must in the end prevail. How many hon. Members, especially on the Government side, had declared over and over again in their election speeches that "the principle of Liberalism is trust in the people." This measure merely embodied that principle. It gave no improper immunity to trade unions. The immunity which it embodied was enjoyed for a period of twenty-one years—up till quite recently. In that time strikes were continually diminishing; disputes decreased; trade boomed, and the prosperity of the country increased. While strikes had been fewer and feuds less bitter in this country the very reverse had been the case on the continent. Ought not these facts to encourage them to support this Bill, and to make certain the immunity which trade unionists believed they had so long enjoyed?

*Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) remarked upon the very significant fact that with the exception of the Attorney-General himself and the hon. Member for North-West Durham, not a single Member on the opposite side of the House had said a word in support of the Government measure. As the Attorney-General had rather cast doubt on the statement of the hon. Member for the Clitheroe Division that he had pledged himself in his election campaign to the support of this Bill, he would like to read the answer given by the hon. and learned Gentleman at a meeting held under the auspices of the Middleton branch of the Yorkshire Miners' Association on January 11th. The question put was—

> "Are you in favour of the Trade Disputes Bill, the whole Bill, as introduced into Parliament last year and approved by the organised workers of the country?"

The answer of the Attorney-General was plain and specific. It was—

> "Yes, I am. I have previously supported the Bill, and was only prevented last year by illness from doing so again."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.): What has been read by the hon. Member is substantially accurate. I have voted for a Bill on these lines before; but I have voted for a Bill on these lines before, as I am prepared to vote for it again, because it was the only mode of dealing with this question. But I may say that, so far from having pledged myself to the scheme which he favours in preference to the scheme which I suggest, I pointed out at a large meeting of trade unionist boilermakers on that very night my own scheme, and I invited them to say whether they thought it right to insist upon a position which would enable them to repudiate responsibility for the deliberately authorised act or policy of their union, and there was not one of them who did not prefer my scheme.

*Mr. KEIR HARDIE said that unfortunately there was no one to put the other side of the case. He could quite understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman would put the question to an unlearned and unlettered audience in such a way as to obtain a particular answer. But he had photographs of some of the posters which the hon. and learned Gentleman used in his election and they all were headed—

> "Vote for Walton and the Trade Disputes Bill."

The only Trade Disputes Bill before the country was the Bill now before the House; a Bill which had twice been read a second time and which had on one occasion got half through its Committee stage. The hon. Member for the Walton

Division of Liverpool had been the principal speaker in opposition to this measure. The hon. Member had a pretty wit, which the House enjoyed, and a vivid imagination, which had led him into mistakes as to the meaning of this Bill and what it would accomplish if it became law. The hon. Member had pointed out that there were more workmen in this country outside trade unions than there were inside by some millions. That, unfortunately for those men, was true. But the Bill imposed no disability on working men outside trade unions. It sometimes happened that the men who were not trade unionists wanted to strike and in the course of the strike wanted to picket. The picketing clause of this Bill applied equally to them as to organised labour. The House was warned as to what would happen if 100 men turned out peacefully to persuade one man to abstain from work. A hundred men turning out for the purpose would be a nuisance and could be dealt with by the common law. It was not proposed to abrogate the common law but to remove the limitation imposed on picketing by the law courts. The promoters of the Bill asked that the pickets should be allowed not only to state the facts but to use arguments to persuade a man to abstain from working. If they exceeded the limits of peaceful persuasion they could be indicted for a breach of the peace, and prosecuted the same as any one else. The Bill applied equally to employers and to employed. If employers formed a combination, as they were entitled to do, this Bill protected their funds in the same way as it protected the funds of the workmen's organisations. The hon. Member had also said that the trade unions funds were never immune from liability for damage since the passing of the Act of 1871, and had asserted that those funds were always liable to be assessed in respect of damage resulting from the action of local agents or members of the union. By the strict interpretation of the law that might have been so, although that had been disputed by as great legal luminaries as those who had so interpreted the law. But whatever the theory was, under the law of 1871 and 1875 it was practically impossible to bring an action against a union. Previous to the amending law of 1881, action had to be brought against every individual man of the union, and the interest of each man in the funds of the union had to be specified, and it was physically impossible to sue 1,000 members of an organisation and specify the particular interest of each individual in the funds of the organisation. But for that fact a clause on the lines of this Bill would have been inserted in the Act of 1871. It was assumed at the time that the Act legalising trade unions made it impossible for a trade union to sue or be sued. That fact was assumed, and that being so, it was not thought necessary to discuss the question. The reason the House of Lords was able to give a decision against the trade union was because the law of judicature was amended in 1881—ten years after the passing of the Trade Unions Act. The House of Commons were now asked to put the trade unions upon the footing on which they were in 1871, and the footing upon which they would still have been but for the passing of the Act of 1881, and the rules made in respect to that Act. They were asking for no new principle to be introduced into the law of England. They asked the House to do what a former House of Commons did thirty-five years ago. It was said they were claiming special class legislation, but they were not. But even so, they were entitled to claim special legislation because of the circumstances of the case. What was the Workmen's Compensation Act but class legislation? That Act took the workman outside the operation of the common law of the land because the circumstances of the case justified that's being done. Therefore they would in a large measure be justified, even if they were now to demand this as a piece of class legislation, if the trade unions were shown to be, as they believed they were, in a position which was unfair as compared with that of the employers' organisations. The funds of a trade union were its war ammunition and commissariat. Without funds union labour disputes could not be carried on. All they asked was that since trade unions and strikes had been legalised, the means by which the unions were able to conduct strikes should not be at the mercy of their opponents.

They did not desire strikes. No person who had been engaged in one strike ever desired to engage in another. He would add only one final word. As had been said by the previous speaker, if by any mischance the Bill now before the House was rejected and that of the Government put in its place, they would refuse to accept such a Bill as a settlement of the question. Such a thing would lead to a long conflict in the House itself and outside the House, and hon. Gentlemen on both sides who had had some experience of what organised labour could do when in earnest would not desire a repetition of the experience of the last election. Hon. Gentlemen on all sides of the House would not desire this question to remain as a disturbing element in politics. He hoped therefore that as the Government had decided and was pledged to the country to deal with this question they would deal with it in such a way as to remove it for ever from the field of politics. What they suggested was that the funds of the unions—not the individual members or officers of the unions, but the funds should be absolutely immune from attack. That was the demand of the trade union Members, and he hoped that whoever spoke on behalf of the Government to-day would take up a more sympathetic attitude towards the main principle than that which the Attorney-General had taken up two days previously. They were in earnest in this matter. If it were said that the passing of this Bill would lead to a conflict in another House, his reply was, leave that to the Labour Members. Whoever came into conflict with the movement of organised labour upon this question would live to rue the day that they ever entered the lists.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I wish to say comparatively few words on this matter. I am old enough as a Parliamentarian to have been in the House at the time when the legislation with which we are dealing was commenced, and I remember following with great interest what took place at the time. But I never have been, and I do not profess to be now very intimately acquainted with the technicalities of the question, or with the legal points involved in it. The great object then was, and still is, to place the two rival powers of capital and labour on an equality, so that the fight between them, so far as fight was necessary, should be at least a fair one. At that time workmen were prohibited from combining for the purpose of protecting their interests, and in many other ways were under restrictions. The Bills which were passed between 1870 and 1880 had a most beneficent effect. They gave life and strength to the trade unions, very much to the alarm of a great body of opinion in the country, which had contracted a habit of looking upon those associations with dread and suspicion. That prejudice still lurks in some quarters; but the great mass of opinion in the country recognise fully now the beneficent nature of the trade union organisations, and recognise also the great services that those organisations have done in the prevention of conflict and the promotion of harmony between labour and capital. I believe myself that all the best employers —I almost hope, I might say, all the good employers—in the country welcome anything which gives freedom and power to associations of so useful and beneficent a character as these. That is a great revolution in the attitude of public feeling, and that is a revolution which we are bound to take into account to-day. Well, notwithstanding all that was done, the trade unions were subject, as my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General said the other day, to the rigorous application of the law of agency, which was inapplicable to those organisations. And judicial decisions, which may have been right or may have been wrong—with that I have no concern—have undoubtedly defeated the intention of Parliament. I do not think that this can be denied, and there is one piece of evidence which I think is very strong, which may have been quoted already. It is the evidence of a distinguished servant of the State who took a leading part in the promotion of this legislation at the time I refer to. He was by no means a revolutionary; I mean Sir Godfrey Lushington. In an article three or four years ago he repudiates altogether the modern judicial practice that the law of agency was by implication incorporated in the Act of 1875. He says—

> "I may be permitted to say that the intention thus attributed by judicial inference to Parliament was, in my belief, contrary to what was the intention in fact. Few, I think, can doubt this who read Lord Aberdare's speech, in introducing the measure, and as a matter of history, the question of the liability of trade unions funds was not publicly mooted either before or during the proceedings of Parliament, and indeed not afterwards for thirty years. At the time it was not dreamt of—"

this is the statement of a man who was up to the elbows in the preparation and carrying out of that legislation—

> "if any proposition of the sort had been started it would have been stoutly opposed."

Now here we have, as I say, an authoritative opinion from almost the highest authority, and the corollary of this is that the state of things which we seek to amend to-day has been produced by Judge-made law, directly counter to the intended law of Parliament. Meritorious though the Judge-made law may be, or the reverse, it has never been sanctioned; on the contrary, it has been expressly disavowed by Parliament. That makes it all the more unfair to taunt the unions who have been deprived of their legal rights by this action of the Judges with seeking a privilege when they come to this House in search of a remedy. We seek to redress that injury in several particulars. The Bill before the House is not an unfamiliar Bill. I myself voted for it two or three times, and I do not remember that I made any reservations. Probably I had not knowledge enough to invent reservations. I always vote on the Second Reading of a Bill with the understood reservation of details, which are to be considered afterwards. That is the universal practice. Shall I repeat that vote to-day? [Cries of "Yes."] I do not see any reason under the sun why I should not. There are three points in these, if I may so call them, rival Bills. On two there is harmony. On the third point there is a difference—not a difference of object, but of method. Therefore the difference narrows itself down greatly. We are going to the same point, but we take different roads to reach it. That is really the state of the case. The principal argument that I have heard used—I do not profess myself to have an adequate acquaintance with the technicalities of the case—in favour of the simpler method which I think is a forcible one, is that the method of restricting agency leaves pitfalls and loopholes from which there is great danger of producing and multiplying litigation. I do not say that this argument is so conclusive, but so far as it goes it is in favour of that other method. My advice to the House is to pass the Second Reading of this Bill, and the point on which difference exists being a point of detail for Committee, I cannot but hope, nay, I confidently expect, that it may have been found possible before further progress is made in the matter to adjust the differences that exist—differences which are not differences in spirit or tone or in ultimate effect, but in method, and even to some extent in phrase—so that we may attain that which is our common end, namely, the freeing from impediments and risks of those beneficent institutions to which we owe so much in improving not only the condition of the working classes, but the relations between masters and men.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover) said he had listened to the speech of the Prime Minister during its opening sentences, which dealt with his historical revision in doubt. He had heard the conclusion of the speech with blank amazement. It was incredible that the right hon. Gentleman should on Friday ask the House to vote for this Bill when his Attorney-General had on Wednesday put forward, in solemn argument, reasons for adopting another course.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: He said he hoped it would be left to the judgment of the House.

MR. WYNDHAM: We did not so understand the Attorney-General.

SIR JOHN WALTON: I said it twice.

MR. WYNDHAM asked why, if the Attorney-General meant that this was an open question, he used three or four cogent arguments against taking the very course which the Prime Minister now advised the House to take. He was astonished, and his astonishment was shared by the great majority of his right hon. and hon. friends. He knew his hon. friend the Member for the Walton Division hinted that the Prime Minister would advise the House to vote for this measure instead of following tactics with which they were more familiar and leaving it to the decision of the House, but he thought that was a bit of forensic acumen. Except for the hon. Member he did not suppose that anyone else believed that the right hon. Gentleman would do anything except follow the course taken by the Attorney-General forty-eight hours previously. If it was right for the Prime Minister to advise the House to vote to-day for the third clause——

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not say so.

MR. WYNDHAM said that if the Prime Minister thought it right to advise the House to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill and to leave the adjustment of the third clause over as a matter of detail, then the action of the Government last Wednesday was towards the Labour Party and the large numbers of people whom the Labour Party represented an act of stupid provocation. If the Government were right on Wednesday in warning the House of the great dangers which we should incur if this very course were adopted, their action now was a cowardly surrender. The Prime Minister had said that he could not think of any reason under the sun why he should not advise the House to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. The reason was sitting on his right in the shape of his own Law Officer. The Prime Minister had indeed refrained from the refined cruelty of asking his Law Officer to say on Friday the reverse of what he had said on Wednesday, but that was all the consideration which the Attorney-General had received from his colleague. Let the House recall what had been said only two days previously. The Attorney-General not once or twice but on three separate occasions in the course of his speech implored the House to deal very seriously with this matter. The main argument used to-day had been based on the proposition that the funds of trade unions were to have complete immunity. It was juggling with words to say that judge-made law had altered the intention of Parliament. Up to a certain point many of them had admitted that the law of agency pressed hardly on trade unions in this matter, and that it was a question to be carefully considered, but no hon. Members had said, to his knowledge, that they were in favour of granting this complete immunity. It was against such a provision that the hon. and learned Member on Wednesday had warned the House in such solemn tones. The hon. and learned Gentleman had drawn a picture of some of the risks that would be run if they accepted the advice now tendered by the Prime Minister and had invited them, before they put a proposition of that kind into legislative shape, seriously to consider that it would be impossible to confine it to these combinations. If the Prime Minister had been present during the whole of this debate he would have discovered that it was not the intention of some Members to confine that proposition to trade unions.

If there were any value, as he thought there was, in the point made by the hon. Member for East Manchester in reply to his hon. and learned friend the Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, then the Bill of the Labour Party as already drawn would give similar and equal immunity to the funds of any corporation of trade or commerce.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent the Bill, but the funds invested in trade and commerce are under statutory regulation now, but of a different kind to that applied to trade unions, and therefore this Bill would not apply to them at all.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understood the Leader of the Labour Party to accept the point made by the hon. and learned Member for East Manchester that any combination of employers would enjoy under this Bill the same privileges.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: A combination of employers to protect their interests as against a combination of workmen to protect theirs.

MR. WYNDHAM said that, therefore, if there were any combination of employers such as the Standard Oil Trust in America he presumed they could claim equal immunity. He was not a lawyer, and it might be that the opinion of those who were not lawyers was not worth a brass farthing, but if he had erred in the construction of the Bill, did it not show how right the Attorney-General was to warn the House against adopting a course, which, though it looked so simple, was full of pitfalls? There was another proposal for extending this exemption. The hon. Member for North Dublin, in the absence of the Prime Minister, had informed the Government that if they voted for the Second Reading it would be on the explicit understanding that in Committee they would extend its provisions to agrarian combinations in Ireland.

MR. CLANCY said he stated that they would give an unqualified and unconditional support to the Second Reading of this Bill, but he pointed out that its title would enable them to extend its scope, and that they intended to get it extended if they could. He did not, however, make the carrying of that Amendment a condition of support to the Bill.

MR. WYNDHAM apologised to the hon. Gentleman if he overstated his personal attitude or the attitude of the Nationalist Party.

MR. CLANCY said he stated at the commencement of his speech that he was speaking for the Party to which he belonged.

MR. WYNDHAM said the hon. Gentleman would see that though he had made his position clear he had not in the least touched the argument he was putting before the House, because hon. Members from Ireland would desire an extension of the provisions of the Bill. There fore the Attorney-General was wise in warning the House that they could not pass the Bill as if it were a matter restricted wholly to trade unions, but that if they passed a law based on this proposition of complete immunity for one body in the State, it was obvious that other bodies would come, if not in this Session, in succeeding sessions, to ask for immunity. That was a grave danger. Three times the Attorney-General asked the House seriously to consider that danger. Was the Prime Minister serious in the action he had taken? Because, if he was, his action amounted almost to a breach of faith with the House of Commons. Not only did the Attorney-General ask the House to hesitate before they adopted this proposal, but three times he told the House that they were to have ample opportunity to consider his Bill, and he held out the hope that, after mature consideration, they would find his solution—which was the solution of the Government—efficient and satisfactory. Those were ample pledges to the House of Commons that they were not to be committed to any other solution until they had the solution of the Government before them. He did not know whether the Attorney-General thought it sufficient to say in reply that his Bill was circulated with the votes this evening. The House ought to have the opportunity of examining the Government measure in print before they were called on to decide on another measure. They had not had sufficient opportunity to take all the precautions enjoined upon them by the Attorney-General. Having read the proposals of the Government in print the House ought to have the advantage of hearing an explanation of the proposals, and a repetition of the warnings of the Attorney-General, or the reason given why they had evaporated in so short a time. The House was not being fairly used by the Government in this matter. It was not as if the Bill brought in by the Government on Wednesday was a measure that had been hastily put together. It was the result of the legal advice, not only of the Attorney-General, but also of the great legal authorities who sat in the Cabinet, whose views in this matter they knew to be opposed to the Bill the Government had asked the House to support. It was within the knowledge of all who had studied the question that the Chancellor of the Exchequer less than three years ago deprecated the royal road of complete immunity as forcibly as the Attorney-General deprecated it two days ago. They had the advantage of the advice of these legal luminaries and of those who voted for the Bill of the Labour Party with reservation, and of those who voted for it without reservation; they had the advice of these three bodies on mixing the ingredients, and then, as Lord Rosebery said, three men made the salad when a fourth man came in and threw it out of the window. [An Hon. Member: You won't throw this out.] The Government would gain nothing by their pusillanimous surrender of to-day. Did the Prime Minister mean that the clause of the Attorney-General was the same thing in effect as Clause 3 of the Bill of the Labour Party? Did the Government allow the Attorney-General to make that speech of solemn warning to the House knowing all the time that there was another road to the same goal? They behaved like gipsies who stole the children of others, and, having disfigured them, passed them off as their own. Was this putting up of the Attorney-General with his wire entanglements but another example of the elaborate transparent subterfuges to which the House was growing accustomed? When the Government tried to hoodwink one section of the House, they openly winked with a leer at another. If Clause 3 of the Labour Party's Bill was the same as Clause 4 of the Government Bill, what was the meaning of the speech of the Attorney-General? Was the Prime Minister going to send this Bill to a Grand Committee?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know. I think those in charge of the Bill should be asked that question.

I do not think that, after the experience of the handling of the Bill of last year by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, they are likely to hanker after a Grand Committee.

MR. WYNDHAM said he ought to have known. They on the Opposition side had not yet learnt their lesson, He did not know that when the Labour Party were in charge of a Bill they were also in charge of the Government. He therefore dismissed the hypothesis that this Bill was going to a Grand Committee. Was the Government Bill going to a Grand Committee? The Prime Minister had told the House that a judicious blend of the two Bills was ultimately to be reached, but was he going to send both to a Select Committee? They did not know. They were invited to vote on this measure based on a principle against which they had been warned by the Attorney-General forty-eight hours ago, and they did not know whether the two Bills were to be taken together or whether this Bill was to have precedence of the Government Bill. The Prime Minister was trifling with the House and had broken faith with it. The opportunity for the mature consideration of the Government Bill promised by the Attorney-General had been withheld, and in order that the minority in this House, who had as good right as any men in the House to stand up for fair and open dealing, might protest against Parliament being degraded to the level of the complaisance and surrender of the Government, and, in order that the Prime Minister might tell them how he meant to run these two horses and on which he meant to declare to win, he moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 66; Noes, 370. (Division List No. 35.)

AYES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareh'm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Wiillamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William, (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, RtHn. Richard Knight
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H(Sussex, E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay(Galw'y
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W.H. (St.Pancras,N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon, Eustace
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordon, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfred
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.

Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell. C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (RoscommonN
O'Malley, William
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestly, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Royerts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tynside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Ropner, Colonel, Sir Robert
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, P. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton underLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowdon, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York. W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.

Mr. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said he voted for the Second Reading of the Trade Disputes Bill last year, and he wished to give a few reasons why he should take a different course this afternoon. Last year he voted for the Bill on the same grounds that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer did. He was one of those who thought that the late Government ought to have brought forward a measure dealing with this question. That was the main reason which induced him to vote for the Bill last year. He did not, however, bind himself to all the details, and particularly in reference to Clause 3. The Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion said there was no reason whatever, although he disagreed with the mode proposed, why he should refuse his assent to the Second Reading of this clause, as well as to the rest of the Bill, but that he proposed to limit the law of agency. He voted in the same way as the right hon. Gentleman because he wished to see a measure brought in with a limitation to the law of agency. In his constituency he had many trade unionists, the greater portion of whom were miners, and in representing those miners in the House he took the view which he believed was the view upheld by them. Last year the hon. Member for Mid Durham, in seconding the Bill, used these words, to which he entirely agreed—

> "All he said was, 'give us fair play.' He would concede this: that if a Committee or an organisation deputed any man whatever to do that which might be wrong, he had no objection to it being made liable, because it was the union itself which was doing it. But if he went to a place where there was a strike without the sanction of the Committee, and urged the men to do that which was wrong, he ought to be punished, and the funds ought not to be mulcted."

That was the view of the hon. Member for Mid Durham, and he gathered last year that it was also the view of the right hon. Member for Morpeth. Again, in answer to Sir Robert Finlay, the then Attorney-General, the hon. Member for Mid Durham said that when an unlawful act had been committed, and the trade organisation or general council had given instructions, there was no reason why they should not be held responsible. He gathered that these were the views of men like the right hon. Member for Morpeth and the miners' representatives for the North, and the threats of the Labour Party would make no difference to the course he should pursue. He took his view on this question from the Members for Morpeth and Mid Durham, and the words last year of the hon. Member for Mid Durham justified him in preferring the Government Bill to the present measure. The mover of the Bill said that what they claimed was complete immunity from the law for their funds. Were all other bodies and individuals to have complete immunity from the law for their funds or not? The Prime Minister had stated that he was going to vote for the Bill. He did not know whether that announcement was meant as a lead to the House or not. He should vote against the Bill not on political grounds—it was not their duty to prevent this egg being laid in the nest of the Government, as it might produce very uncomfortable consequences—but because he had an honest conviction that the Bill introduced by the Government was a far better one, and ought to receive their support. He looked on the conduct of the Government with astonishment. They had imitated the tactics of the late Government in running away from their own measures. That was an example which he should have thought they would avoid when they saw the result those tactics had produced in the Unionist Party. Did Members opposite think they would escape the same consequences? He was sorry to say that Liberal ideas of statesmanship now seemed to be contained in one phrase—devolution of responsibility and concession to clamour.

Mr. Lambton.

*MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.) said the House always accorded generous treatment to its new Members and not the less readily when the topic under discussion was difficult in principle and complex in its details. He laboured under the disadvantage of following the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. But although he followed that gentleman in point of time he would not follow him in his spirit of Party recrimination. The right hon. Gentleman repudiated any connection with law. He could not help feeling as he listened to the rhetorical vehemence of his speech what a great loss it was to the Old Bailey that the right hon. Gentleman had not adopted the profession of the law, for the right hon. Gentleman had at least mastered one maxim of the legal profession — "when you have a bad case drag in your opponent's attorney, and indulge in strong language and abuse at the expense of your opponent." He thought it was more important now that they should deal with the principles involved in this Bill. There was no obligation on them to follow any of those legal by-paths which were sometimes introduced into the discussion. They did not lead to practical results, and he felt that much of the learning and research often applied to this question really meant waste of time. What they were concerned with to-day was not a question of law, but a question of statesmanship, and it did not concern them to follow the intricate legislation and litigation of the past thirty or forty years. The obligation upon them was to define clearly and beyond all possible dispute what should be the relations of those contending parties in future. He had followed with great care the Report of the Royal Commission, and he felt that for the Commissioners it was a difficult task to steer their course past the obstacles on the one hand and the other with regard to the legal position. They had done so with remarkable skill. It appeared to him that in all the bewildering confusion which had marked the law of the past twenty years, there was only one clear lesson to-day, and that was the absolute and imperative need of simplicity. He thought that Parliament should lay down principles which were unmistakable. Those principles should be laid down in language which was clear and transparent, and which it would be impossible for the ingenuity of lawyers to confuse.

He had referred to this need of simplicity because he wished to deal with what was really the one controversial issue in this dispute, namely, the freedom of trade union funds from liability. He held very strongly the view that the wise course was to adopt the principle of this Bill, and to have a wide, clear, and comprehensive enactment. If Parliament wished to settle the issue itself, and not leave it to the legislative action of the law courts, it could only effect that purpose by adopting some such principle as that contained in the Bill. In the first place there were, as they all knew, practical difficulties in connection with trade union funds. There was the difficulty of distinguishing such parts as were of a charitable or benevolent nature. He did not wish to dwell on that aspect, but it was an important practical point. There was also the principle laid down by the Labour Members that workmen's unions should in practice and in fact be on an equality with employers' associations. Those points had already been dealt with very fully. He would therefore deal only with one or two broad considerations. It was objected, he understood, that if a Bill of this character were passed into law it would place very great power in the hands of trade unionists. For himself he did not regard power as an evil. The curse of to-day was not the existence of power in organised communities which were capable of exercising it, but the absence of such power, and the impossibility of getting useful things done because power was refused. Then it was urged that great bodies of working men were not competent to use, or were not worthy to receive, this great power. On that point he should like to say that the reposing of power, or the giving of great responsibility, to large communities of men had in itself a kind of steadying influence upon their actions. It might be that, here and there, individuals whose natures were distorted abused the power which they were permitted to wield, but history had shown that in cases where great numbers of men acted together, power invariably brought with it responsibility and sobriety of judgment, and that the very numbers themselves provided the antidote for the evils which were feared. Then it was said that such a power would be unique and exceptional. It was quite true that the effect of such an enactment would be that these collective funds would not stand on exactly the same footing in the eye of the law as the private property of individuals. But they were not the property of individuals; and he had no hesitation in saying that there was no constitutional ground or grounds of political principle, why the property of communities and the property of individuals should necessarily be bound by the same law. Rules of law properly applicable between individuals did not necessarily apply to aggregations of men. That this was so was conceded by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House in the fact that they continued to support the old doctrine of conspiracy. What was the law of conspiracy? It was that when they got a quantity of men acting together they got necessarily a difference in the quality of their action. The same principle was recognised in the sphere of international politics where over and over again the local and personal law applicable between individuals yielded to broader considerations of policy in dealing with great masses of mankind. It seemed to him, that here, too, they were dealing with a question of policy which transcended the limited confines of the laws applicable between individual men. He thought there would be no danger in granting a unique position to trade unions, because they could rely on the inherent wisdom and justice of the working classes. If there was one quality which permeated the whole British race more than another it was the quality of practical judgment and a great sense of moderation and justice, and in this question they were entitled to rely on that great quality of the race. When in this House they saw the Labour representatives presenting their views so calmly, so considerately and with such a spirit of moderation, they were entitled to draw the inference that they would use this power with similar discretion. They had the evidence before their own eyes. Then, too, the experience of the past thirty years had given clear evidence that the power which was asked would be used in such a spirit. It was of the greatest national importance that trade unions should be strong. They had been valuable in preventing great trade disputes. That was much. But they were also needed for national work. One of the greatest problems before the nation was that of distribution. This problem the Trade Unions were helping to solve step by step and without revolution or disastrous social strife. In that way they were taking their part in a great national movement. They should receive a full measure of confidence and be drawn more and more into responsibility and be made strong. They should receive such immunity in respect of their funds as would enable them not only to deal with trade disputes but to help in solving the important social problems before the country.

He supported the broad principle of the Bill.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) said they were under some difficulty in discussing this question on account of the course taken by the Government. He had not had an opportunity of reading the Bill which was introduced by the Attorney-General, and had been circulated only that morning. He voted last year against the Trade Disputes Bill mainly because of what was proposed by the third clause, and he objected now to the idea of any class being given special privileges. He was quite willing to admit that the law required some change, but what were they to think of the spectacle of the Government running away from their own Bill? The Attorney-General had brought forward excellent arguments for not placing trade union funds above the law, and now, two days afterwards, when another Bill was brought forward on the same subject, the Prime Minister had told them that he was going to leave the matter open, and that he himself would vote for the Bill. It was amazing that the strongest Government of modern times should run away from their own Bill. The sooner Ministers showed some backbone in dealing with the difficult question before the House, the easier it would be for all Parties to know where they stood and to carry on the business of the country. He protested against being compelled to vote on a Bill of this kind without having a chance of considering the Bill of the Government. If the Government believed in its own Bill, and if its provisions were in accordance with the judgment of Ministers, it was an insult to the House that the Government should say they were going to support a Bill which was an entire contradiction in its main points of the Bill the hon. and learned Attorney-General had outlined. He protested emphatically against the setting up of class privileges in the way proposed by the Bill now before the House, which was to receive the support of the Government against their own arguments and their own good judgment. After many years had been spent in attempts to abolish class privileges, this Bill proposed to re-enact them.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 404; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 36.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair

Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, W.(T'w'rHomlets,S.Geo.
Bethell, J. H. (Essex,Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex,Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black,Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramson, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol,S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay (Galwy
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacy
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt. Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L.(Caithn'ss-s
Harrington, Timothy W
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt Hon Lewis
Hardie,J Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R L (Caithn'ss-s
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.

MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen, C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edin'gh, Central)
Price,RobertJohn (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F.(Wolver'hmpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ricketts, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt.Hon.E.(Dundee
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson,SirGScott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H.Y.
Stanley, Hn.A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W.C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, SirA. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred (Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amberst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds,S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,JohnCathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George(York,W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson,A.(Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson,J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M‘Kinnon
Woodhouse,SirJ T.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.

NOES.

Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.

Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon Col. W.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Neild, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hon. J G (Oxf'd Univ)
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark
Turnour, Viscount
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Evelyn Cecil and Sir William Bull.

Question put accordingly.

The House divided :—Ayes, 416; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 37.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashley, W. W.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Banner, John S. Harwood
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastb'rne)
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (D'v'np'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S Geo.
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedf'dshire)
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberd'n)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. P'ncr's, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H. (S's'x, E. Grins'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (G'l'y)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W.H. (St. P'ncr's, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-F'n'ss)
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)

Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn. Herb't John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr T'dvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L. (Caith'ss-sh)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, J. M. (Ab'd'n, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (S'm'rs't,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor(Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accr'gton
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, H'rw'h)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. M. (FalkirkB'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh, Charles (D'n'g'l, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson, Charles N. (D'nc't'r.
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipp'ary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Rosc'm'n, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James(Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'tha'pton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, C'ntr'l)
Price, Robert John (N'f'k, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B.(Bradf'd, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro')
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n)
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Br'df'd
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manch'st'r)
Scott, A. H.(Ashton-under-L'e)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John

Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr)
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John(Stoke-upon-Trent)
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah, C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke, (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson,A.(Elgin and Nairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W.(Worcestersh, N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse,Lord (Norfolk,Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes.—Mr Arthur Henderson and Mr Ramsay Macdonald.

NOES.

Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Craig,Captain James (Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (Yor)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills J. W.
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants.,Fareh'm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Dublin, S
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (trand)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson, W. Mitchell(Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley,Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes.—Mr F. E. Smith and Sir William Bull.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Tuesday, April 24th.

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE BILL.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday next.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 2nd April, 1906.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with in respect of the petition for the following Bill: Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Millwall Dock; North Metropolitan Tramways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Earl of Dartney, Chairman of the Select Committee, reported that the Earl of Harrowby was not present on Saturday last, and that the Committee continued sitting in the absence of the Earl of Harrowby, all parties having consented thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Channel Ferry Railway and Quay Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn; the Order made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Llandrindod Wells Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the Day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

H. R. Baines & Company Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]; Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited—(Petition for Bill). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

County of Aberdeen (Moneymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [H. L.]. Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADES REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3541. Italy (Foreign Trade of Italy).

No. 3542. Germany (Finances of the Kingdom of Saxony).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools; of—

Parents and guardians of children attending schools at Coldhurst; Oldham; and Denton St. Anne's; teachers in schools at St. Anne's, Denton.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE CULTIVATION OF SUGAR BEET.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH rose to call attention to the success which has attended the experimental cultivation of sugar beet in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and to the great advantages which would accrue from the successful establishment of a home sugar industry; and to ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend, in the event of sugar being manufactured in the United Kingdom, to take powers to impose an excise duty on such sugar, and in that case whether, with a view of proving the possibility of establishing a home sugar industry, they will consider the advisability of encouraging the introduction of the capital necessary for that purpose by granting, for a term of years, a rebate of such excise duty, up to the limit of 2s. 6d. per cwt., as permitted by the Brussels Convention to all sugar-producing countries.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I do not know that I need apologise to the House for bringing this question to your Lordships' notice, because no one who has looked into the question at all will be prepared to deny that it is one of very great agricultural importance, although it is curious that comparatively few people amongst the general public have followed it. They have generally been content with vague assertions, which, as a rule, have come from ill-informed people, that the climate of the British islands is not suitable for the growing of sugar beet, and that, therefore, it is no use bothering any more about the question. There have been certain failures of attempts that have been made in the past, but these have not been inquired into very closely, and it has not been appreciated that the causes which operated adversely thirty and forty years ago need not necessarily operate adversely at the present day.

I want to draw your Lordships' attention to the fact that sugar beet is grown in almost every European country except our own—in France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria Russia, Sweden, Northern Italy, Roumania, Servia—in fact, in every country in Europe. Besides that, it is being grown successfully in Canada, in the United States, in South Africa, in New Zealand, and other places. The production last year from Europe alone was some 7,000,000 tons of sugar; and as it takes about seven and a half tons of sugar beet to make one ton of sugar, it is evident that something like the enormous quantity of 50,000,000 tons of beetroot must have been grown on the continent during last year for this purpose; and on an average of about twelve tons to the acre, that means that about 4,500,000 acres were under beet last season, and, on a four-course system, we get the figure of 18,000,000 acres on the continent of Europe deriving great benefit from sugar beet culture. Then, again, in the United States the industry is growing rapidly. Whereas a few years ago only a few thousand tons of sugar were made, last year the quantity had risen to 265,000 tons, and that amount is rapidly increasing.

It is well known to everybody in the trade, I think, and to everybody who has visited Germany, that there is an enormous amount of money invested in the factories spread over that country. There are about 400 of them, all engaged in the manufacture of sugar from the beetroot. The point which I ask your Lordships to remember is this, that sugar beet requires good and deep cultivation, good and careful manuring, and also very careful weeding. This keeps the land clean and adds to the general fertility of the soil, and so improves the whole agriculture of the district and the succeeding crops, whilst the tops which are cut off the roots, and are technically known as the slices—the residue of the beetroot after the juice has been pressed out of it—are returned to the farmers and form excellent food for cattle. Local factories are absolutely necessary, because you have to treat the roots, extract the juice, and manufacture the sugar at some point convenient to the ground where the beet is grown, so as to reduce the cost of carriage to the very lowest point. The roots are raised about the end of September or the beginning of October and are taken to the factory. The factory is kept working for two or three months, thus giving a great deal of employment during the winter, when work is invariably slack on the land. The net result is that wherever beet culture has been taken up it has proved the greatest possible boon to the agricultural district; that is, of course, provided it is properly managed.

The noble Lord below the gangway opposite, Lord Reay, who has had experience in beet-growing in Holland, told me the other day that he had some fault to find with the method in which it was grown in that country. No doubt the noble Lord will have something to say on the subject in the course of this discussion. All I would say is that it is unfair, because an industry is not conducted on proper principles in one place, to condemn the whole industry. At all events, there is no denying the fact that in the greater part of the beet-growing districts of Europe it can only be described as an immense success, and more especially in Germany, where it is well known to everybody acquainted with that country, and it is acknowledged by the Germans themselves that the sugar beet industry has been the salvation of German agriculture during the last twenty or thirty years.

I have here a copy of the Report that was made some thirty years ago for the State of Minnesota by a successful grower and sugar beet cultivator in Sweden, and he refers in this Report to a triumphal arch which he saw in France at some local agricultural festival, and on this triumphal arch was set out the fact that before the introduction of beet culture into that district there had been only 700 head of cattle kept, whereas some years after the introduction of beet culture that number had grown to 11,500, and at the same time the yield of wheat in that district had very largely increased. Instances such as that could be multiplied indefinitely; but there is no necessity for me to give more details in that respect than this general statement. I merely wish to point to the magnitude of the industry abroad, and the fact that here, in the British Islands, it is at present practically unknown.

Some thirty or forty years ago a few isolated attempts were made in this country. Unfortunately they failed, but according to all that I have been told by people conversant with the facts, by experts in the trade, the reasons for their failure are perfectly explicable, and need not exist at the present day. There was one well-known instance of a comparatively small factory started at Lavenham, in Suffolk, by the late Mr. Duncan. This factory did pretty well for a time and made money. Then troubles arose. In those days corn and other crops were of more value to the farmers than now, and farmers were much more difficult to move then than they are now. Mr. Duncan found very great difficulty in inducing the farmers to keep up a continuous and proper supply of beet to the factory. Then difficulties arose with the local authorities on account of the disposal of the waste water, which from sugar factories is very often somewhat objectionable. Finally, after the Franco-German war, came the question of foreign sugar bounties, which resulted in sugar being sold in this country far below the price at which it could possibly be produced; and it was then found impossible to carry on the Lavenham factory, and the whole thing was given up. There were one or two other attempts—there was one made in Berkshire—but I believe they were run on wrong lines and badly managed; and I suggest that the best and most profitable of businesses can be ruined by bad management.

In recent years very great changes have taken place. The value of the roots for sugar purposes depends mainly on two things—the percentage of saccharine matter and the purity of the juice. Since the days of the Lavenham factory the seed which is used on the continent has been vastly improved, and by careful selection and cultivation a very much larger proportion of saccharine matter is now produced. I was told by the late manager that at the Lavenham factory only 10 per cent. of saccharine matter was obtained, whereas the general average in Germany and on the continent is now frequently from 15 to 17 per cent., thus showing that something like 50 per cent. more sugar can be obtained from a given acreage than was possible thirty or forty years ago. Then the process of extracting the sugar has been completely revolutionised; machinery has been improved, lime is now used in very large quantities, and it is available for the farmer as a very valuable fertiliser for the land.

For a good many years experiments have been made in this country in the growing of sugar beet in small quantities. Those experiments have been carried on to a larger extent than the general public is aware of, and I think that much credit is due to various experts—notably, I might mention Dr. Gustaf Schack-Sommer, and Mr. Sigmund Stein, of Liverpool—who have gone to immense trouble and considerable personal expense in carrying on experiments in most of the counties of England, in several portions of Scotland, and in various parts of Ireland. These results have been carefully analysed, tabulated, and published from time to time. As the result of all these experiments, so far as they have gone, it has been found that the saccharine properties of the roots and their purity generally exceeds the results which are obtainable in Germany and on the continent of Europe; and I hold that it is conclusively proved, so far as the actual growing of the roots is concerned, that in most parts of England, and many parts of Ireland and Scotland, we can grow beetroots just as well as they can abroad.

We are constantly told that it is no use trying beet-growing in the British Islands. I have often been told that there is not enough sun here. A well-known and distinguished agriculturist—at that time a Member of the House of Commons—told me two years ago that it was absolutely no good trying to grow beet in this country because there was not enough sun. He said he had been told so in Austria, and he knew it to be the fact. I do not understand what the Austrians know of our British climate. We have tried this industry here, and it has been conclusively proved that we can grow sugar beet. I know it has been said by some wag that in this country we have not a climate at all, that we have only samples of weather; but, so far as these experiments are concerned, the British samples of weather seem to suit the beetroot, and I think, if it is possible in a particular locality properly to ripen one acre of beetroot, there is no reason why you cannot equally in the same district ripen 1,000 acres of it. During the years 1902 and 1903 we were notoriously short of sun. I paid particular attention to the result of the analyses of the roots grown during those years, and there was very little appreciable difference between them and those grown in the sunny years that preceded this period.

The Earl of Denbigh.

I have carried on considerable experiments on my own land. I read about this subject some years ago, and found it interesting. I realised that there were great possibilities in this country. I could not find out that any beetroot had been grown in Warwickshire, and I thought it interesting to try the experiment. I first grew some small lots myself for two or three years, and then I invited the co-operation of four of my tenants. I asked each one to plant one acre of beetroot in the middle of a crop of mangolds, and to plant it in a strip right across the field, so as to take in all qualities of land. I asked them also to treat it as they would a regular ordinary agricultural crop. I gave them the seed and the manures. My agent, who has taken great interest in this question, drew up instructions, and I offered prizes each year for the best results, the results to be based on the saccharine properties of the roots grown and the weight of the crops. We carried on these experiments for four years. The results were eminently satisfactory, and both in regard to the saccharine properties and the weight of the crops we did quite as well as, if not generally considerably better than, they do in Germany.

What I want to point out to your Lordships is this, that this is as far as we have been able to get at present; it is impossible to get any further until capital is forthcoming to enable factories to be erected, and it has been clearly demonstrated that it is no good beginning on a small scale. We must proceed on a thorough commercial scale, on a large and expensive scale. It is no use asking farmers to grow roots in large quantities when there is no market for them, because, unfortunately, raw beetroots are of very little use for cattle-feeding purposes, although the slices, after the sugar has been got out of them, are extremely valuable in this way. As I have said, it is no use growing roots when you have no market for them; and there are no factories erected because there are no roots grown. The consequence is we get no "forrarder." Nobody, whilst foreign bounties existed, was likely to risk money in an industry of this sort when sugar could be brought in from the continent and sold in this country at a price far below the cost of manufacture here. I would point out respectfully to the Government that it is only since the Brussels Convention and the abolition of the sugar bounties that this gigantic and important agricultural industry has been brought within reach of British agriculturists.

Now I want to say a word on the question of profits. To induce farmers to grow beet you must be prepared and able to pay them a satisfactory price for it; and considering that you cannot depend upon growing very much more, I think, than about thirteen tons to the acre, although good farmers and good land would very likely produce considerably more, you must be able to pay the farmer about £1 a ton, or, at the very least, 19s. a ton, for the cleaned roots, either delivered at the factory or some central spot within two or three miles of his farm. As I have said, you ought to be able to grow thirteen tons to the acre in this country. The average German crop of cleaned roots per acre is about twelve tons, but that is only the average. Good farmers and good land would produce considerably more, whilst, of course, bad farmers and bad land would produce less.

Judging from our own results, although it is unsafe to generalise from small experiments, I think that with our good system of agriculture and our good land, we ought to be able to grow a larger average than the Germans. Besides being paid direct for the beetroots sold to the factory the farmer would get valuable feeding stuff in the tops which are left upon the land, and which work out at a value of 5s. a ton. He would also get back from the factories the slices, which would enable him to keep more stock, and he would also get lime at a cheaper rate for his land. The cost of growing an acre of beetroot, as far as we can see, ought to be about £10, and taking into consideration the figures I have given, I think that a farmer ought to be able to make a net profit of between £2 and £3 an acre, and probably more. In view of the value of agricultural crops at the present moment, I think most practical farmers will tell your Lordships that a crop which will give you a clear net profit of about £3 an acre is, to use a vulgar expression, one that is not to be sneezed at in these days.

Then as to the factory. I am advised on all hands that it is not the least bit of good trying to run factories economically on a small scale. They must be run on a large scale, which will enable you to treat from 30,000 to 40,000 tons of roots a year. That would enable you to turn out between 5,000 and 6,000 tons of sugar, which would mean that about 3,000 acres would be under beet in each season, and on a four-course system you would want 12,000 acres of land available for growing beet. That is not quite so alarming as it sounds, because I think it will be found that great possibilities will be opened up by the new system of motor traction. Owing to motor traction it will not be necessary to grow roots in the immediate neighbourhood of the factory; you will be able to go very much further afield for them. Again, if you had your factory conveniently situated on some waterway, either a navigable river or a canal, you could have the roots grown at a considerable distance, gathered at collecting places, and brought at a cheap rate to the factory.

The method of proceeding would be this. You would first of all have to select a suitable site in a good arable district; you would want good water carriage, convenient roads, a good water supply for the factory, and cheap coal. I can mention to your Lordships two such districts. One is known as the Isle of Axholme, in North Lincolnshire, and the other is Felixstowe, in Suffolk, at both of which places great local interest has been taken in this question. Having found your sites and secured the guarantee of the money, farmers would have to be interested in the question, contracts for beet would have to be made for five or ten years head, and your factory would be erected and would start in the autumn, and turn out finished sugar direct to the trade. Your Lordships will see that a great deal of instruction and organisation are necessary before a factory could be running at its full capacity, and in the most economical way. You have many problems to settle. The labour difficulty might take some time to overcome, and it would be useless to expect that a factory in a new industry started in this way, no matter what it might be in a few years time when properly organised, could possibly earn full profits during the first few years of working. The consequence is, that unless the local conditions were exceptionally favourable, you would have to build up this industry bit by bit.

If the Government are going to put the full excise duty of 4s. 2d. on sugar, there is every probability of the factory being run at a considerable loss at first, and that makes it correspondingly hard to get any capital invested in it. A word on the question of the excise duty. When the sugar duty was put on a few years ago, at the rate of 4s. 2d, a cwt., no power was taken to impose an excise duty, because there was no home manufacture of sugar. I asked the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in the correspondence which I have ventured to circulate to your Lordships what his action would be in the event of sugar being manufactured in this country, and your Lordships will have seen that he informed me that in consequence of the pledges which the late Government had given to embark in no sort of departure from the existing fiscal system of the country prior to the late General Election, it would be an obligation on the part of the Government to put on the full excise duty of 4s. 2d.

The price of sugar now is, I think about 8s. 5d. per cwt. That is below cost price at the present moment owing to the stocks which have been carried forward from the abnormal crop of last year. But the price cannot remain indefinitely at that figure, and I am informed by authorities in the trade that when the price settles down it will probably be found to average something between 9s. and 9s. 6d. per cwt. It costs 8s. 6d. a cwt. to make sugar when you have everything running well, and, therefore, in starting a new industry of this description, even if the price of sugar was raised to 9s. a cwt., there would be almost certain loss for some time after the commencement. I suggest to the House that nobody but a lunatic or a philanthropist would put up £80,000 if he did not see some prospect of getting a return for it. Consequently, if the Government insist upon placing on this industry the full excise duty, I am afraid we shall have to wait indefinitely for capital unless sugar prices rise very considerably, which, of course, is undesirable in the general interests of the consumer, and may have an unsettling effect on the market. Therefore, the agricultural community will be very much in the position of that wretched donkey that you sometimes see in pictures, with a carrot dangling at the end of his nose, which he is always following and never gets any nearer to. The agricultural community will see this great industry brought very nearly within their reach by the Brussels Convention, and yet kept away by what I suggest is nothing but a system of fiscal pedantry by which some people in this country libel the memory of Mr. Cobden, and to which the community will every day be getting rather more averse. I do not mean to infer that I am what is known as a Protectionist. I do not bring this matter forward in the interests of protection. I merely ask His Majesty's Government to consider whether it is not possible to have some little elasticity in this matter, and whether this great question is not one which calls for that elasticity. By the Brussels Convention all sugar-producing countries were permitted to give their home sugar an advantage of 2s. 6d. a cwt. over imported sugars. Therefore, if the excise here was limited to 1s. 8d., which is the difference between 2s. 6d. and the full duty of 4s. 2d., an immediate profit would be available, and I am perfectly certain that capital would be at once forthcoming for the purpose of embarking in this industry and proving it a success to its full extent. As I said a moment ago, I do not bring this forward in the interests of protection. I am taking my stand on the doctrine of John Stuart Mill. I do not know whether Mill is too antiquated for the advanced opinions of noble Lords opposite. One noble Lord shakes his head. Well, I will read what John Stuart Mill had to say on this subject. He said—

> "The only case in which, on mere principles of political economy, protective duties can be defensible, is when they are imposed temporarily (especially in a young and rising nation) in hopes of naturalising a foreign industry, in itself perfectly suitable to the circumstances of the country. The superiority of one country over another in a branch of production often arises only from having begun it sooner. There may be no inherent advantage on one part, or disadvantage on the other, but only a present superiority of acquired skill and experience. A country which has this skill and experience yet to acquire may in other respects be better adapted to the production than those which were earlier in the field; and besides, it is a just remark of Mr. Rae, that nothing has a greater tendency to promote improvements in any branch of production than its trial under a new set of conditions. But it cannot be expected that individuals should at their own risk, or rather to their certain loss, introduce a new manufacture, and bear the burden of carrying it on until the producers have been educated up to the level of those with whom the processes are traditional. A protecting duty, continued for a reasonable time will sometimes be the least inconvenient mode in which the nation can tax itself for the support of such an experiment. But the protection should be confined to cases in which there is good ground of assurance that the industry which it fosters will after a time be able to dispense with it; nor should the domestic producers ever be allowed to expect that it will be continued to them beyond the time necessary for a fair trial of what they are capable of accomplishing."

I ask the House, could there possibly be a fairer case, a case which you could find more applicable to that extract from the writings of John Stuart Mill. You have a case here in which foreign countries have a start of us in this great industry. They have trained their farmers to grow sugar-beet; they have railway facilities for handling the sugar; they have expert manufacturers; and surely this is a case where we can claim some help, some encouragement, from His Majesty's Government for a young and rising industry, in order to enable us to attain the same state of perfection as that gained by the foreigner. Later on, when the people of this country get used to it, there is no reason at all why, with our good land, our cheap coal, our markets close at hand, and the saving of freight from Germany, we should not be able to compete successfully with the foreigner. All I ask is that we should be given a chance.

I will read to your Lordships an extract from a statement made by Mr. George Martineau, C.B., a gentleman well known in the sugar world, and one of the British delegates to the Brussels Convention, and I think I may say that what he does not know about the cultivation of sugar beet and the sugar trade is not worth knowing. Mr. Martineau says—

> "The final consideration with regard to the sugar position created by the abolition of bounties is, perhaps, one of the most important. It was shown (more than thirty years ago) that beet-sugar could be grown in this country with as much success as on the Continent; but the bounties stood in the way of further progress. That impediment having been removed, there is no reason why we should not produce from our own land, and with our own labour, some of the sugar we consume. The country, I know, is absolutely apathetic on the subject, ignorant of the blessing that such an industry would bring to the British farmer, but, in some cases, even sufficiently prejudiced to declare that a scheme of this kind would be impracticable. There must be no experimenting on a small scale, the thing must be done with all the well-established improvements, and on such a scale as to make success a certainty by reducing cost of production to a minimum. The very best land must be chosen, and plenty of it, well situated with regard to rail and water carriage, and with the certainty of obtaining a full supply of roots, cultivated in the most approved fashion, and contracted for in advance for several years. Under such circumstances we shall have a new industry—agricultural and manufacturing—of the very first importance. One successful factory will show the way to hundreds more, and we shall again hold up our heads as agriculturists with a real home industry. To make machinery for such an industry will require another new departure. The growing of the roots, we shall soon discover, will give us new ideas of farming and new energies on the land. Crops all round will improve, cattle will multiply, the railways and canals will discover new employment, and the labourer will go back to the land. This is a dream, but it can be made a reality."

I will now quote to your Lordships a short extract from a Report of Dr. Shack Sommer. He points out that—

> "During the winter months, when the agricultural labourers are generally unemployed, this industry would employ large numbers. In Germany some 100,000 men are thus employed in the factories when no other work is available. Nor is the benefit confined to labour, for machine manufacturers, coal-miners, lime quarries, brick works, and all allied trades will feel the beneficial influence of improved business. The matter is one of national importance, especially to agriculture, and ought to be taken up in the first instance

by landed proprietors, who would no doubt find ready co-operation among capitalists."

Your Lordships will have noticed that a few days ago I altered the terms of the second Question which I had placed on the Notice Paper. I did that entirely out of consideration for His Majesty's Government. About ten days ago a correspondent wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and asked him if an excise duty would be put upon home-made sugar. He was told, in reply, that it would, "for the protection of the revenue." When I read that I was momentarily filled with hope. I remarked that nothing was said about the fiscal system, and I hoped that possibly a common-sense view had been taken of this subject, and that when I could show His Majesty's Government that a very considerable time would have to elapse before the great revenue derived from sugar could be seriously encroached upon, the opposition might possibly be withdrawn. A sum of £6,000,000 is obtained from the 1,500,000 tons of sugar we import into this country. When I saw that letter I thought in my innocence that all would be well could I only make the Government realise that if, after several years, say 100,000 tons were produced here with a loss of some £400,000 of revenue, that would be amply compensated for by the establishment of a growing industry in this country. I subsequently ascertained, however, that the Government contemplated giving an emphatic negative to my Question on the ground that it had a protective taint. I have already explained that I bring this matter forward in no protective sense at all.

When I found out the intention of the Government I realised what a mistake it was to put one's foot down prematurely on a subject on which one has imperfect information, and upon which one has not fully calculated the consequences. We have had an instance of that lately. and I altered the form of my Question with a view of permitting the noble Lord opposite to give me a perfectly evasive Answer. I have no political motive in this. If I had, I could wish for no better text to preach from to the agriculturists of this country than to be able to show that when I brought this question before His Majesty's Government we were met with an emphatic negative before they had considered the question, and that they had slammed the door in the face of the sugar industry.

Some of your Lordships have probably heard the story of the great statesman—I think it was Lord Palmerston—who had a somewhat concise and original way of minuting his correspondence. When he wrote "C.A." in the corner of a letter it meant that his secretary was to send a civil answer; but if he wrote "T.B.D"—I am glad to see that the right rev. Prelate has left the House—the secretary understood him to mean: "Tell him to be damned." What I expect happened was this. It will be admitted that at Budget time the ordinary mortal has to be extremely careful how he meddles with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. My question was probably brought to the notice of Mr. Asquith when he was deep in the mysteries of his Budget, and he said—

> "This is nothing but blatant protection. Touch my reveune, no certainly not;"

and he forthwith wrote on it the Asquith equivalent for "T.B.D.," and the noble Lord opposite was probably instructed to convey the same to me in forcible but appropriate Parliamentary terms. I do not wish to be disrespectful to that great Department, the Treasury, but still I suggest it is possible to be a great and valuable Treasury official without, perhaps, having reached that giddy pinnacle of agricultural expert knowledge which enables a man to determine between the respective virtues of a swede and a mangel-wurzel, and it is quite likely that the Treasury have not fully considered this from an agricultural point of view. All that I ask now is that they will consider it before giving me a definite answer.

May I ask whether I have been in any way successful in bringing points in connection with this question to the notice of your Lordships which you were not fully acquainted with before; and may I ask His Majesty's Government whether I have been able to bring to their notice some points with which they were not fully conversant. If so, I ask them will they not consider this matter in the light of some of the things which I have put before them, and not merely give me the ordinary sealed pattern typewritten Treasury answer, written in the office and without any consideration of the arguments that were to be adduced in favour of the proposal? I do not know whether the noble Lord is going to tell me that they will not even consider it. Perhaps he is going to tell me that they will consider it merely for the purpose of humouring the peculiarities of a crank. But I do hope they will look upon this matter in a different form, that they will think it over, and do something to show that the British can claim to be a practical people at fitful moments when they are able to put their common sense in front of their politics. Cannot you see that by establishing this industry you will be giving employment to thousands in the country districts both in the summer and winter months, and doing an immense deal towards solving the great problem of the migration of people from agricultural districts to the towns? Is it not possible to put on one side the various terms, Protection, Free Trade, Fair Trade, and the like, and consider the matter solely from the point of view of whether it is or is not for the good of the country that this industry should be cultivated. I cannot understand how there can be two opinions about it. A few nights ago I listened in another place to a violent denunciation of the Sugar Convention, but I did not hear one single word from anybody on either side of the House which gave any sort of indication that they appreciated the fact that by this Sugar Convention, and by it alone, this great agricultural industry has been brought within the reach of our people. We hear lurid accounts of men thrown out of employment in the mineral water and confectionery trades, accounts which I believe are very greatly exaggerated, though possibly some of the manufacturers' profits have been slightly curtailed. I hazard the opinion that if mineral water manufacturers did not indulge in so much throat-cutting competition among themselves, they would probably be able to make satisfactory profits even with sugar at a higher price than that at which it stands at this moment, and there would be no occasion to throw their men out of work.

I am of a sceptical nature, and as I listened to the debate I could not help thinking how much of this denunciation was real sympathy with the displaced workmen, and how much of it was merely political gas which was being let off for the purpose of trying to damage the late Government. I have no desire to be uncharitable, and when I say I doubt the sincerity of what I heard I say it advisedly, because I do not remember ever having heard similar denunciation of competition from foreign sweated labour, which has thrown far more men out of work than the rise in the price of sugar. In the opinion of the supporters of His Majesty's Government in another place, if any men have been thrown out of work on account of the rise in the price of sugar it is all the fault of the late Government, but if they are thrown out by foreign competition, then, I suppose, the men have to be thankful at being sacrificed upon the altar of their country's good and have to take something else and lump it, perhaps take small holdings and make jam.

I am truly sorry for the people who are thrown out of work by the rise in the price of sugar; but are there no ruined farmers in the country? Are there no labourers driven to the town? Has no land got out of cultivation? I do not wish to deny the merits of the confectionery trade or the mineral water trade. I have frequently indulged in a wild debauch on ginger-pop myself on a hot summer's day. But I think that the agricultural industry is of far greater importance than that of the mineral water and confectionery trades; and if these trades have had their innings while sugar has been cheap, is it not fair now to ask that agriculturists should be given their turn? When it is remembered that the rise of a few shillings in the price of sugar means the difference between profit and loss to a factory which turns out several thousand tons of sugar a year, and that it means very little indeed to the individual consumer, one cannot help feeling that there is a great deal of cant and humbug being talked about this question at the present moment.

We are told that it is a great hardship on the poorest of the poor. Of course, every penny of expense is a hardship on the poorest of the poor; but I suggest to your Lordships that the best way to reduce the numbers of those unfortunate people is not necessarily by providing unlimited cheap sugar but by doing something to improve the industries of the country and lessening the number of unemployed that are walking about. I do not know whether it is useless to appeal to His Majesty's Government and their supporters in another place to stop what I consider to be this short-sighted partisan railing at the Brussels Convention and the abolition of bounties, and to ask them to realise the opportunites that have now been brought within the reach of all of us. Noble Lords have talked of land legislation to cure rural evils. If you turn all your estates into small holdings you will only be increasing the number of those on the land. It will be only playing with the question. By helping agriculturists to grow a profitable crop and a new one, and by starting an industry which will give employment during the winter months, you will do more to encourage small holdings and to keep people on the land than all the legislation in the world.

I apologise to your Lordships for having detained you so long. I should like to say, in conclusion, that I have no axe of my own to grind in this matter. I am not concerned in any sugar industry, nor is there the least probability of my being so interested. Although I have grown experimental sugar beet on my property, my own property is not in any way suited for the erection of a factory and the prosecution of this industry in its initial stages. I merely looked into this question from the point of view of a humble landowner some years ago, and I have tried to take a more or less intelligent interest in it, and it is only because I saw what I thought was a great mistake being made with regard to the Brussels Convention by noble Lords and their followers opposite, that I deemed it right to bring this matter before the attention of the House. I hope, therefore, your Lordships will realise its importance, and that this matter will not be allowed indefinitely to drop.

Finally, I would make an appeal to the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture. I would ask him to master all the details of the possibilities of this great industry, and then see if he cannot master the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his colleagues in the Government. Let the Board of Agriculture take some initiative in this matter. The time for sitting on office stools and receiving reports from private individuals who have conducted experiments up and down the country has now gone by, and by the Brussels Convention, which so many of your friends find fault with, you have got an opportunity of doing something to establish this industry in this country. I am certain, if during the term of office of the noble Earl and through his efforts this industry could be successfully started in this country, that when the time comes, if it ever does come, for him to go into temporary retirement, he will, at all events, have some reason to feel proud of the work of his department, and he will realise that more practical work has been done for agriculture in this country in his time than during the term of office of any President of his Board since it was established.

*LORD DENMAN: My Lords, in rising to reply on behalf of the Treasury I think I may say that, whatever our opinions on this subject may be, we cannot but admire the thoroughness with which the noble Earl has studied this question and carried out experiments on his own estates in Warwickshire to demonstrate the possibilities of the cultivation of sugar beet. The greater part of his speech appeared to me to be very fair, and, I may say, uncontroversial. To the latter part of his speech, which dealt with criticisms of our conduct with regard to the Brussels Convention, I do not propose to reply, because it seems to me hardly relevant when discussing the Question which he has asked to-night.

We in this House, at any rate, are all agreed on one point. We all of us desire to do whatever lies in our power to benefit the farmer, and, indeed, to improve the condition of the agricultural community generally. The question we have to consider this afternoon is whether those benefits which the noble Earl has outlined can be conferred in the way he suggests without prejudice to the interests of other classes in the United Kingdom and other communities within the Empire. Let me say here that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with whom I had an interview on this question, certainly did not tell me to reply to the noble Earl in forcible language. He did not use the letters "T.B.D.," whatever they may mean, and I may also say that my notes were not typewritten in the Treasury, but were dictated by myself. The noble Earl has filled a position similar to that which I now occupy, and I do not know whether he was speaking from his own experience when he made that suggestion.

Briefly, the case is as follows. At the time of the introduction of the sugar duty by a distinguished member of your Lordships House, Viscount St. Aldwyn, in 1901, there was no cultivation of sugar beet in this country, and there was no prospect of its cultivation. Accordingly there was no provision for an excise duty upon sugar produced in the United Kingdom; but by our international obligations under the Brussels Convention we are compelled, on the basis of the existing customs duty, to impose an excise duty of 1s. 9d. per cwt. on refined sugar produced from beet grown in the United Kingdom. The customs duty is now 4s. 2d. per cwt. on refined sugar, and thus there is a margin of 2s. 5d. between it and the obligatory excise duty of 1s. 9d. The proposal of my noble friend is that this 2s. 5d. should not be exacted either in whole or in part.

This is not the first time that the noble Earl has approached the Treasury in this matter, and if I wanted what some of us, at all events, might think a conclusive objection to the proposals he has put forward it is to be found in a letter written to him by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, and which I am sure the noble Earl will not mind my quoting, as he has published the correspondence. Mr. Austen Chamberlain said—

> "Whatever view we may take of this question—this rebate of the excise—it cannot be denied that such a step as you ask for would be a great departure from the fiscal system hitherto adopted in this country, and His Majesty's Government are precluded from making such a change during the present Parliament by the pledges they have given to the country."

That was the deliberate opinion of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that is the opinion of His Majesty's Government to-day. Naturally, if the late Government were precluded by pledges which they had given to the country from making such a change, how much more is His Majesty's present Government precluded from making this change? In other words, the proposal of my noble friend would mean the admission of protection into our fiscal system.

The noble Earl has urged Mill's theory for the view that it is consistent with a general free trade policy to allow protection for a limited period in the case of infant industries; and I think it must be refreshing to us on this side of the House to find noble Lords opposite quoting from economists to whose opinion they do not always, I think, pay such high regard. But though, after what the noble Earl himself has said, I am sure that he, at any rate, would exculpate us if we acceded to his request from departing, if indeed it be a departure, from the principles of free trade, we cannot be blind to the fact that there are many supporters of the noble Earl who would immediately claim us as Protectionists or as converts to the policy of tariff reform.

This is no exaggerated statement to make, because when my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade the other day introduced in another place the Merchant Shipping Bill, which deals principally with the necessity of placing certain life saving apparatus upon certain ships, and lays down a minimum standard of rations for British seamen, the Opposition immediately claimed the President of the Board of Trade as a convert to the principles of protection or tariff reform. It may appear a little difficult to the ordinary lay mind to connect the placng of life saving apparatus on ships with the intricacies of our fiscal system; but that is what the Opposition attempted to do. How much more, then, would they claim us as protectionists and as converts to their policy if we granted the request which the noble Earl has made to us to-night? Indeed, I think we should hear a whoop of triumph from protectionist platform and protectionist Press if we, a free trade Government, pledged to maintain inviolate the cause of free trade and returned to power at the general election mainly upon what I will describe for the sake of brevity as the free trade issue, were to sanction this departure, or, at all events, what would be represented as a departure, from free trade principles.

But, my Lords, there are other reasons than these why His Majesty's Government object to the proposals of the noble Earl, and they are quite as much reasons of expediency as of principle. Putting aside the question of the fiscal policy altogether, if we accede to this principle and if such an industry as the noble Earl proposes to establish does grow up, then it is perfectly possible—indeed, after what he has said I think it is probable—that it would be almost entirely dependent, or might be entirely dependent, upon this rebate from the excise which he asks us to give. Some Chancellor of the Exchequer of the future might be compelled to withdraw this rebate, and then what would happen to this industry which had grown up in the meanwhile? There would naturally be great distress in those districts where sugar was being cultivated, and there might be equally great hardship in those centres where sugar refineries had been established and thousands of persons might be thrown out of employment. Further, His Majesty's Government think that if it is desirable to encourage any industry in its inception, such encouragement had better take the form of a direct bounty proposed and voted upon in Parliament, because then the taxpayer would know exactly how much he was asked to contribute for a specific purpose.

I have another reason which I must urge against the proposals of my noble friend, and it is this. Supposing that he succeeds and this industry is established. You have to consider another part of His Majesty's dominions—namely, the West Indies. You must consider how such an industry would affect the prosperity of the West Indies. I think I am right in stating that sugar made from sugar beet is an inferior article to the cane grown sugar imported from the West Indies, and I believe one of the objects of the Brussels Convention was to increase the production of cane grown sugar as opposed to beet grown sugar, not in any way to check the production of the latter, but rather to increase the production of the former. If you establish on a large scale the cultivation of an inferior, and very possibly a cheaper sort of sugar in this country, I ask noble Lords to consider how it will affect the West Indies. It is bound to create great competition with the West Indies, and it is quite certain that we should receive protests—very probably strong protests—from the West Indies if we acceded to these proposals. We are deliberately prevented by the Brussels Convention, for which the noble Earl has professed so much admiration, from giving to the West Indies, even if we wished, preferential treatment to the same degree and at the same time. I have argued this quite apart from the question of free trade *versus* tariff reform; and it seems to me that this last is a very grave objection to the proposal of the noble Earl and one which possibly he may not have taken into account.

Lord Denman.

Now, perhaps, I may give the noble Earl one solitary ray of comfort. He is not quite correct in stating that the full equivalent excise duty will be so high as 4s. 2d. per cwt. It has always been the practice of the Treasury to allow some deduction on the excise duty so as to compensate the home producer for the extra restrictions and cost to which he is supposed to be put as compared with the foreigner by excise supervision and regulations. At the present stage of the sugar industry in this country it is almost impossible to give a definite figure and say how much this reduction will be. It will not be a very great reduction probably, but still it will be a reduction on this figure of 4s. 2d. per cwt.

Those are the principal reasons why His Majesty's Government are unable to give a favourable consideration to the proposals of my noble friend. I observe, as he said, that he has altered his question, that he does not ask us to make up our minds at once, but to consider whether we cannot give him some hope. I do not think, after what I have said, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer can give him much hope, and after the reasons I have urged, I really do not think future Chancellors of the Exchequer will be able to hold out more favourable prospects to my noble friend than the right hon. Gentleman who at present occupies that position. For when you consider the reasons which I have urged against the proposal of the noble Earl, I think it must be clear that such a delicate exotic as this industry, dependent as it would be upon the shelter and the protection of rebates on the excise or of bounties——

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: Only for a time.

*LORD DENMAN: The noble Lord did not state how long.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: I think I said for a term of years, for five or ten years.

*LORD DENMAN: Well, for five or ten years, at all events, the industry would require this powerful protection and this careful supervision; and I think it is evident that in the long run it is not likely to prove of great advantage to the agricultural classes in this country, nor, indeed, to any other class. In conclusion, I would only say that I honestly regret having to give what I fear the noble Earl will consider such an unsatisfactory answer, recognising as I do, the courteous way in which he has raised this question, and, if I may say so with the respect due to a more experienced Member of this House than myself, the clearness and conciseness with which he put forward his case.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, my noble friend opposite has appealed to me, and I am sure we are all very much indebted to him for the interesting speech he has made on a subject of which I, at all events, fully recognise the importance. I shall not rely on "vague assertions," but I shall address your Lordships from personal experience with regard to the growing of beetroot.

In the district in the Netherlands with which I am connected, the sugar factory makes a contract with the farmer for the delivery of the beetroot and then gives the cultivator an advance of money. The Association of Sugar Factories—the sugar factories throughout the country form a union, of which most of the factory managers are members—meet in January, and in that month the contract price which will be given for the beetroot in the next campaign is settled. The price, of course, varies in different districts. The delivery is made on the "*tel quel*" system—whatever the quality of the root the contract price is given. There are, however, some contracts made—they are in the minority—where the price depends on the proportion of saccharine matter found in the root. Fluctuations in the market price of sugar have been very considerable, and that is an element which my noble friend will certainly admit to be of very great importance. In January, 1902, the price of sugar was at a minimum; in February, 1905, it was at a maximum; and the difference was so great that it was more than double. The price of sugar in the general market, of course, exercises an influence on the price which can be given for the beetroot, and the contract price, which is settled, as I have said, in January, determines the acreage which will be set apart for the crop during the ensuing year. If the price is high, you have a larger acreage; if the price is low, you get a smaller acreage. But there is another factor. The acreage devoted to beetroot depends on the profit which can be made from other crops. The results—and I would call the special attention of the House to this fact—obtained in the district with which I am acquainted, show that the average return of beetroot is about the same as the average return from wheat, barley and flax, and an average return of potatoes is equivalent to a first-rate return of beetroot. There is no special advantage in growing beetroot as compared with these crops.

Substantial farmers—farmers with sufficient capital who own their farm and are independent of rent—and also tenant farmers, in whose leases this is prohibited, do not grow beetroot. Beetroot is mostly grown by the impecunious farmer who has no capital, and who is tempted by the advance of money. The consequence is that he becomes entirely dependent on the factory, and is encouraged to grow more beetroot than he ought, in accordance with a proper rotation of crops. In order to be quite safe with regard to beetroot you ought not to give more than one-seventh or one-eighth of the acreage of a farm to beetroot unless you are prepared to manure it to such an extent, and to spend so much capital on manuring, that you return to the soil what you take out of it, because I am sure the noble Lord will admit that it is a very exhausting crop. The farmer must either obtain this additional manure on his farm by allowing for this rotation, or he must have capital to purchase it, and also to provide for the additional labour which this crop requires and for the wear and tear of his horses and of his carts, which is very great. But I agree with the noble Earl that motors will be of great use, and will also affect the distance of the factory from the place where the crop is grown.

Where favourable conditions prevail it cannot be denied that there is a great advantage in introducing beetroot as one of the crops in the rotation, because it attracts capital and secures labour in the winter. It also introduces a new industry into the district. Beetroot production in the district with which I am connected has been diminished as a result of the improved condition of agriculture. The cultivation of beetroot is an index, a thermometer, of the general condition of agriculture. Where the value of other crops increases there is a decrease in beetroot cultivation. Where the value of other crops diminishes there beetroot cultivation increases. A very important question, one to which the noble Earl has not alluded, but to which I was glad to note my noble friend Lord Denman referred, is whether beetroot sugar can compete with cane sugar if the bounties, as is not impossible, disappear. I think the noble Earl will find, if he looks into the market prices of cane sugar and beet sugar, that it is very doubtful, without an artificial stimulus, that the competition of beetroot can be kept up. The beetroot which is grown for feeding purposes can be grown on light soils and yields about three or four times the quantity and the weight of the small beetroot which contains the saccharine matter and to which preference is given for sugar cultivation. In addition to other food, beetroot is, no doubt, a very valuable ingredient for cattle. There is another element to which I think the noble Earl has not alluded, and that is the importance of getting cheap coal for the sugar factories.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH: I alluded to the necessity of cheap coal.

*LORD REAY: That is a very important point, and I am told by my noble friend Lord Northbourne, who was interested in the Lavenham experiment, that the cause of the failure of that experiment was mainly to be found in the cost of coal. Beetroot will generally be grown at some distance from the coalpits. I agree with the noble Earl that there is no climatic difficulty in the growth of beetroot in this country. Where you grow mangel-wurzel you can grow beetroot. I am afraid we in Scotland, at all events in my part, would not be able to try the experiment of beetroot growing because we do not grow mangel-wurzel.

The problem you have to solve is to secure the factory a constant supply of beetroot without making the cultivator dependent on the factory, so that he should only grow beetroot in proper rotation at his own free will when he has a plentiful supply of manure. On the other hand, I agree with the noble Earl that the success of the factory depends on having a steady supply of beet, and not being exposed to having in one year a much larger supply than in another. I also agree with the noble Earl, from my experience in the district of which I have spoken, that the experiment must be on a large scale. It does not pay to have a small factory; you must experiment on a large scale. Perhaps the solution of the problem will be found in applying the co-operative system which has been adopted with such great success in regard to dairy produce in Denmark. I suppose the noble Earl has inquired into that, and perhaps an experiment might be made on that footing. I am afraid I cannot support my noble friend in regard to his appeal to the Treasury. I entirely agree on that point with the answer given by my noble friend Lord Denman. We have always held that as sugar is one of the necessaries of life it should bear as little taxation as possible. It is of the utmost importance to the consumer that sugar should he obtainable at a minimum price, and there is no doubt that what my noble friend desires would have the opposite effect. I take a more sanguine view than he does, and I believe that if you applied co-operative principles to the experiment it would not be so hopeless. But, of course, the greatest caution will be required, as was pointed out by Sir John Lawes and Sir Henry Gilbert in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society for 1898 (3rd Series, Vol. IX. Part II., pp. 344-370.)

THE EARL OF LATHOM: My Lords, I had not intended to intervene in this debate, but I do so as one who has taken part in some of those experiments mentioned by my noble friend who initiated this debate. Unfortunately, I have only lately returned to England, and have not been able to get at the statistics as to what was done in the two or three years during which those experiments went on; but to the best of my belief we were able in Lancashire to produce at the rate of eighteen tons of beetroot per acre, which would give a much larger and better return than that mentioned by my noble friend Lord Denbigh. This, however, I will at once admit is an exceptional part of the country. As the noble Lord who has just sat down has stated, it is generally found that where other crops are profitable beetroot is not grown. It will probably be found that the best places in which to grow these roots are those parts of the country which are suffering somewhat more severely from agricultural depression than is Lancashire at this moment. If grown in such a county as Essex we could not expect such a large return per acre, but, at the same time, the value of the land is much less, and probably it could still be cultivated at a profit if some help were given by the Treasury.

The noble Lord who replied on behalf of the Treasury gave a kindly but a very determined and emphatic answer; and I think I might appeal to the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture to look into this question. We know his energy in all agricultural matters and the deep interest he takes in anything to improve the life and happiness of those who live on the land. I agree with my noble friend Lord Denbigh that if the establishment of this industry would bring back people to the land it would go far towards solving the unemployed problem which we have before us at the present moment. But we do need some help, and a little more help than that rebate from the duty which we are told we can expect. I had wished that we could be told how much that rebate might be, as it would enable us to find out whether it would be profitable for capitalists to invest in this undertaking. I ask once more if the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture can hold out some ray of hope for this industry, which I, for one, believe might with very little help be made profitable and of great use to agricultural interests in this country.

*THE EARL OF ERROLL: My Lords, I have been trying this experiment in Aberdeenshire. The noble Lord who spoke last but one said it would be impossible to grow beetroot in Scotland because we could not grow mangel-wurzel, but I can assure the noble Lord that that is a mistake. I have been trying during the last two years some experiments on a very small scale in the hope of being able to introduce this industry into Scotland, if it could be shown that it was capable of being carried on profitably to the farmer. So far the experiments have been fairly satisfactory. It has already been proved that the roots are good for manufacturing purposes, that they have a very considerable amount of saccharine matter, and that the quotient of purity is satisfactory.

Mr. Hendrick, a member of the Aberdeen and North of Scotland College of Agriculture reporting on my experiment, said—

"The composition of the roots is good and they contain a high percentage of sugar. The sugar was higher in the average than in the German roots. As to the quotient of purity, it was very high."

Mr. Sigmund Stein, of the Sugar Institute, in Liverpool, speaks in similar terms of this experiment. There have been other experiments in Scotland, I believe. There was one on Lady Seafield's estate near Elgin; and I am told that the results there have been more satisfactory than in my own case. I mention these facts to show that there is a possibility of beetroot being grown in Scotland. I know there are some people who think that our climate in Aberdeen is somewhat severe. But the one thing necessary for the growth of beetroot is that you should have plenty of sun, and I believe that the amount of sunshine registered in Aberdeen is greater than that in any other part of Great Britain.

What first suggested these experiments was the Brussels Convention and the abolition of bounties, and it is very important for us to know whether or not, when this Convention terminates, the treaty will be denounced, as it will be obviously useless in such an event to continue these experiments, for no one would put any capital into a business which was liable to be swamped by foreign bounties. Personally, I do not think these bounties will be reimposed, because of the expense, but we always have to deal with a chance of their being deliberately reimposed with the object of checking a new industry in its infancy. I have little doubt that if this industry were once firmly established, and herein, of course, lies the great difficulty, crops might be grown which would give a good return for capital. Moreover, a new industry would be inaugurated which would be of great use to the country.

During the last few years, as your Lordships know, the agricultural industry has not been in a flourishing condition in Scotland, and anything which will attract capital must be a source of gratification to us all. The prospects of farmers in Scotland have not been very high during the last year or two. Last year was no doubt a better year, but during the two previous years farmers had to tide over very bad times. The low price of cattle makes farming in Scotland very different from what it used to be in the seventies, and I think it behoves both landlords and tenants to see whether there are not some other methods by which they may be able to recoup themselves for the losses they have sustained. In all other industries, when they are in the least depressed, an appropriate remedy recognised by all business men is to attract more capital. In agriculture, as a rule, the opposite system seems to be in vogue. The greater our depression the more burdens we get placed on the land.

Under existing conditions I do not think any sane man would invest his money in land when he can get very much better return by putting it in railways and other investments. In Aberdeenshire alone I am told that there are nineteen landed estates for sale, and only one possible purchaser. To attract capital to the sugar industry I cannot but think that some such plan as that suggested by my noble friend would be of great advantage, and the importance of this new departure can hardly be exaggerated. The suggestion of a rebate seems to me both fair and reasonable. It is not desired to protect this industry when it is once established, but merely to foster it in its infancy and until it is strong enough to stand alone. If nothing is done I venture to think that these experiments will be entirely dropped, and a movement which might, I will not say revolutionise, but very materially help, agriculture, will fall through. If this industry could be successfully carried on, I venture to think that eventually sugar would become cheaper and greater employment would be found for the workers. His Majesty's Government have now an opportunity of earning the gratitude of the farmers without in any way injuring or prejudicing the interests of the consumer.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (EARL CARRINGTON): My Lords, I should like to be allowed to say a word or two on this subject simply from the agricultural point of view. I say at once that I should be very sorry to say anything that would appear to throw official cold water on the efforts of the noble Earl who has introduced this subject, for I fully acknowledge the energy and ability with which he has approached this subject from the first, and I am sure it is unnecessary for me to say that no one in your Lordships' House looks upon him or his speeches as possessing the peculiarities of a crank. We know that the noble Earl has no axe to grind, and that he speaks simply in the interests of the agricultural population in which he takes so great an interest.

As to the speech of my noble friend behind me, who spoke as representing the Treasury, I feel sure the noble Earl would be the first to acknowledge that my noble friend let off no political gas to damage the late Government, nor was guilty of any short-sighted political railings against the proposal. The noble Earl expressed the hope that I would master all the details and take the initiative in regard to this scheme. I cannot promise to act upon his second request; but, after the masterly speech he made, we all of us, however little we knew of the subject before, have been able to understand the details of it, and are quite prepared to make up our minds upon it.

The noble Earl showed very conclusively that his scheme would attract capital to this industry. Undoubtedly it would, and it would also provide labour; but there are many disadvantages, and they have been pointed out by my noble friend Lord Reay. What the noble Earl wishes to do is to build up an enterprise by means of protection. The noble Earl told us about the factories which he wished to see established in the country. A factory of the description required could not possibly be built and started under a cost of from £50,000 to £60,000. Each factory would require to have the annual supply of the produce of three thousand acres. The noble Earl told us that it would be impossible to grow beetroot year after year, and that it would have to come to the three or four course system. That would mean an acreage of 12,000 acres—a very large tract of land for this country; and it would be difficult under yearly tenancies to ensure that regular supply of the raw material without which the factories could not run. In France and on the Continent generally, we are told that the necessary supplies of roots are ensured to the factories by the farmers entering into contracts; but, as I have said, these contracts would be difficult to carry out here on account of the yearly tenancies in this country.

The noble Earl spoke of experiments which have been carried on in different parts of the country. Curiously enough, I sat at luncheon the other day close to the Chairman of the Great Central Railway, and he told me that the experiment was tried by an Australian, who put five thousand acres under beet, and built a sugar refinery. The refinery cost him £30,000. That was twenty years ago, and, I believe, there is not a stick or stone remaining at this moment to mark where that factory stood. That is not very promising. But I admit that it is possible that the experiment was carried out on bad principles; and because there was one failure I should be the last person to argue that success was impossible. These experiments appear to show what I think has been agreed on all sides, that crops as heavy and of as good quality can be grown in this country as on the Continent.

The noble Earl stated the cost of making sugar, but that was the cost when the factory was in full blast and under good conditions. Crops in this country have been grown up to twenty tons to the acre, but it is probable that the noble Lords' figures are more to be relied upon when he said that the crops would realise from thirteen to fourteen tons per acre. Well, at 18s. per ton this crop would come to £12 12s. per acre. To that you ought fairly to add £2 2s. for the pulp and other residue, so that the value altogether would be £14 14s. per acre. From this has to be deducted the cost of the manure, the cost of cultivation, and rates and taxes, and I do not think you could put that expenditure at less than £12 an acre, so that the margin of profit to meet the interest on the capital and remunerate the farmer, does not appear to be more attractive than that furnished by other crops. I was under the impression that beetroot was of no value in feeding cattle, but my noble friend, Lord Reay, said it is.

LORD REAY: Yes, certainly.

EARL CARRINGTON: I believe opinions differ on that point, but I think that cultivation under the circumstances I have described would not be very popular in this country, and it seems that the idea cannot be entertained without an infringement of the policy of free trade. I understood the noble Earl opposite, Lord Lathom, to say that even the rebate suggested would not be enough to enable these crops to be cultivated at a profit.

THE EARL OF LATHOM: I did not say that the rebate was not enough. What I said was that I wished the amount of the rebate could have been stated.

EARL CARRINGTON: Then I misunderstood the noble Earl. But if the beetroot crop cannot be made to pay without a rebate from the Exchequer, I cannot see any chance of a contribution in this direction, and, therefore, I am reluctantly compelled to say that I think the proposal, so far as we are concerned, must fall to the ground.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, whatever we may think with regard to the subject which has been brought before us this evening, we must all of us admit that it was introduced to your Lordships by my noble friend behind me in a speech showing great research and ability and much practical acquaintance with the subject itself; and, if this debate has no other result, I think the speech of my noble friend will at all events have been the means of attracting a great deal of public attention, particularly in the agricultural world, to a question which deserves to my mind the serious consideration of the farming community in these islands.

I cannot go on to congratulate my noble friend upon the answer which he has received from His Majesty's Government. My noble friend did not set out with very high hopes, for I think he told your Lordships that he would have been content with an evasive answer. I am afraid the reply which he received did not even contain that element of evasiveness which would have contented my noble friend; I am bound however to say that I am not here to deny that some of the arguments used by the noble Lord who represents the Treasury were entitled to a considerable amount of weight. I do not say that of the argument which he used in the beginning of his speech, which did not seem to me to be at all a conclusive one. He began by telling us that one of the reasons for which His Majesty's Government could not possibly listen to my noble friend's suggestion was that if they did they would be taunted with having become converts to Protection. That is scarcely an argument which I can accept as a serious one, considering the importance of the matter at issue.

But when the noble Lord went on, as he did, to develop his case, he certainly produced other more formidable arguments. He pointed out that if this premium of 2s. 6d. per cwt. were once allowed, there would be a considerable amount of difficulty in depriving the sugar industry of that advantage at a future time. I think there is some force in that. My noble friend read the often quoted passage in Mill which goes to show that infant industries may, with propriety and without any encroachment upon the laws of sound political economy, be encouraged by the State in this manner during the earlier stages of their career. I am one of those who think that that doctrine must be applied with very great caution indeed, because we know that these infant industries are apt to have the secret of eternal youth, and find innumerable reasons why they should continue long after the first years of their existence to receive the encouragement which was accorded to them as a special favour at the outset.

But in fairness to my noble friend Lord Denbigh, I must point out that he, at all events, made it perfectly clear that he did not desire anything more than a strictly limited and temporary encouragement for a very brief term of years. It does not seem to me to follow at all that if this beet industry were to be considered worthy of encouragement the encouragement need necessarily take the particular form indicated by my noble friend, and I think he himself pointed to the fact that in his opinion other forms of encouragement were conceivable. I hope I did not misunderstand the noble Lord who represents the Treasury when I thought he told us that the Treasury did see their way to giving an appreciable amount of encouragement by means of a rebate, which I think he said was sometimes given from the excise duty in particular cases. The remarks made by my noble friend behind me had reference to that point, for my noble friend asked whether it was possible for His Majesty's Government to give us any indication of the extent to which a rebate of that kind might be carried.

Lord DENMAN: I do not think that this is a regular rebate, or what could be described as a rebate.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: I thought the noble Lord used the word himself.

Lord DENMAN: I do not think I used it in this connection. The equivalent excise duty will not, for the reasons I indicated, amount to quite as much as 4s. 2d. per cwt.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: But there would in a case of that kind be an appreciable difference—not, I understand, a large one, but still a difference—between the excise duty and the customs duty. I gather that is what is intended. I hope it may prove to be the case that in this particular form, or in some other, it may be found possible to meet, even to a small extent, the suggestion of my noble friend Lord Denbigh. I think your Lordships will agree that he did show *prima facie* that there was a case for doing all that we possibly could to give this new industry encouragement in its earlier stages. It is an industry which provides an entirely new opening for British agriculture, an industry which not only benefits agriculturists, but also the manufacturers of sugar, and which would involve large demands for new machinery and plant. Any new departure which could have these results is surely one for which we should do all in our power in the way of assistance.

My noble friend showed that if this experiment is to be carried out at all it must be made on a large scale. Small experiments have already been made, and it is highly to the credit of some of these landowners that they should have made these experiments. But if a large experiment is to be made a large initial outlay is necessary, and my noble friend's contention is that during the first few years something should be done to diminish the great loss which, without that assistance, the promoters of the new industry would sustain. That is a suggestion which even now I hope His Majesty's Government may not entirely brush on one side, especially as we are discussing an industry which was effaced in this country by the operation of the system of sugar bounties which prevailed on the continent. Our sugar producers in this country have to compete under altogether exceptional conditions, and if the industry is to be revived they have to make up a great amount of leeway. In those circumstances I cannot help thinking that they have a claim to the most benevolent consideration which His Majesty's Government can see its way to give them.

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of Ripon): My Lords, I should not have troubled your Lordships with any remarks this evening did I not think it desirable that there should be no misunderstanding as to what fell from my noble friend who spoke on behalf of the Treasury. I have here the *ipsissima verba*, and I cannot do better than again read the words to your Lordships.

> "It has always been the practice to allow some deduction on the excise duty so as to compensate the home producer for the extra restrictions and cost to which he is supposed to be put as compared with the foreigner by the excise supervision and regulations."

That was what my noble friend said, and that was the extent to which he went. We all know that excise regulations and supervision are inconvenient to persons engaged in an industry, and what he alluded to was intended to make up for that difference between the conditions of the British beet-grower and the foreigner. It did not go beyond that point.

My noble friend did admit that he saw the danger of making rebates and allowances of that kind for a limited period. I believe it to be impossible. I know that my noble friend Lord Denbigh only asks for it for a limited period, but all experience in these matters goes to show that when that limited period comes to an end you have the most extreme representations made by those engaged in the industry that has profited by the rebate to the effect that you will ruin them if you do not continue it. That has gone on from time to time in these matters, and I think myself it is a perfectly adequate reason why a wise Government will not consent to give special encouragement of this kind, because of the great difficulty of withdrawing it when you have given it.

Those who have had any experience of a Protectionist system know perfectly well how it grows. First one industry is protected, and then another asks for protection, and we all know that to withdraw from a system of that kind is the most difficult thing in the world. My noble friend, in his able and interesting speech, quoted a passage from John Stuart Mill which we have heard quoted before. I think Mr. Mill confined what he said to new countries.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: He said "especially in young countries"—especially, but not only.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Yes, but it was young countries he had in his mind. But there is no passage in Mill's work on political economy that has received such genuine condemnation from all sound political economists as that particular passage. It is the delight and joy of the Protectionist Party, and I daresay we shall hear it again as time goes on; but it is the precise passage throughout the whole of Mill's work to which we Free Traders are bound to take exception. We have had a very useful debate to-night on this subject, and I hope—and from what fell from my noble friend below the gangway, Lord Reay, there is reason to hope—that it will be possible to reopen this industry in this country without artificial help from the Government. I think it would be the worst thing that we could do for a new industry of this kind to promise to give it encouragement for a very limited time.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 2nd April, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords]. Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]. Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 had not been complied with, viz.:—Oldham and Saddleworth District Tramways (Abandonment) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

CROWN LANDS BILL AND DEAN FOREST BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of

Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House on the 28th day of March, That, in the case of the following Bills, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Crown Lands Bill. Dean Forest Bill.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Dowlais Gas Bill. Read a third time, and passed.

Watford Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Milford Docks Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Edinburgh Corporation Bill (by order); North East London Railway Bill (by order); Read a second time, and committed.

South Metropolitan Electric Light and Power Bill (by order); Second Reading deferred till Monday 30th April.

London County Council (Electric Suppy) Bill (by order); Order [26th March] for Committal of the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill read and discharged, Bill committed to a Committee of nine Members, five to be nominated by the House and four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill already presented be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their council, or agents, be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider, with special reference to the proposals to the Bill, the best means of providing for the supply of electrical energy in bulk, and for power and motive purposes, and to report thereon.—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill; Read the third time, and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland Act, 1899, relating to the County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road)." [County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to repeal the Deeds of Settlement of the Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society from the date of its registration as a limited company, and to enlarge the scope of operations of the society, and to make provision for the future government of the society and the management of its affairs; and for other purposes." [Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords.]

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords]; Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; ordered (under Section 7 of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) to be considered upon Wednesday.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bridlington; and, Stanley, and other places in Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITY (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Great Yarmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Accrington (two); Appley Bridge; Atherton; Barnston (two); Bearley (two); Benhilton; Bilsington (two); Bishopswood (two); Bonnington and Hurst (two); Box; Brantham; Breinton Common; Broughton (two); Burnmoor; Bury (three); Carnforth; Chessington; Chilthorne Domer (two); Coldhurst;

Congleton; Corton Denham; Croston (two); Dilhorne; Douglas; Egton; Egton cum Newland; Esprick (two); Fallowfield; Farnham Royal; Farnham St. Martin; Felling; Frant (two); Freckleton (two); Garboldisham; Grafham; Grayswood; Great Saxham; Great Whelnetham; Hampreston; Hampstead; Hatfield; Haskin; Higham St. Mary; Hollowell; Horton; Iddesleigh (two); Ingram; Jarrow on Tyne; Kessingland; Lockhampstead (two), Limington (two); Longgrove (three); Longsight (two); Loppington; Marstow Martock (two); Matravers; Mellor; Nacton; Nash; Oldham (two); Parbold; Poplar; Primrose Hill; Radcliffe St. Anne's (two); Radcliffe Hall; Ranmore; Rusland; St. Andrew's, Manchester (three); St. Anne, Oxenhall; St. Anne's-on-Sea (two); St. Briavel's; St Clears (two); St. Margaret's, Low Wray (two); Sherborne (two); Silverdale; Stixwould; Takeley (two); Taverham; Tenterden; Tolleshunt D'Arcy; Uggeshall; Ulverston; Upper Holloway; Upton Bishop; Virginia Water; Walton d'Eivile; Weeton (two); Werneth; Winchester; Winston (two); Wood Ditton; Yerbeston (two); and Yarlgrave; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INCOME TAX (ASSESSMENTS).

Return [presented 8th March]; to be printed. [No. 102.]

ARMY.

Copy presented, of General Annual Report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3541 and 3542 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts); Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August 1901; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 103.]

Inquiry into Charities (County of Berks): Further Return relative thereto [ordered 28th March 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 104.]

Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Devon); Return relative thereto [ordered 26th July 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 105.]

Public Records (Inland Revenue Department); Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents in the Department of the Inland Revenue which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act.]

Union of Benefices Act (Saint Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square); Copy of Scheme under the Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of Saint Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square [by Act.]

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tomorrow till Tuesday 24th April.

TUBERCULOSIS (ANIMALS) PREVENTION AND COMPENSATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tomorrow till Tuesday 1st May.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postal Service at Drumlish.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether seeing that the present mid-day service of letters from Longford to the cross roads of Leitrim brings the carrier to within two short miles of Drumlish, which is rapidly increasing in business, owing to the establishment of fairs and markets there, he will order that the man continue his journey for the other two miles, in order to afford a much needed service to the people of Drumlish.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As I informed the hon. Member by letter on the 7th instant, I have recently had inquiry made on this subject and have found that the cost of the existing postal service in the district of Drumlish is so high, compared with the amount of the correspondence, that I should not at present be justified in incurring the additional expenditure which would be necessary for carrying out the desired extension.

Dismissal of Government Employees.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Postmaster-General what is the number of men who are under notice of dismissal at the Government factory, Holloway (skilled mechanics); and what is the reason for these dismissals.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I regret that, owing to slackness of work, it has been necessary to give notice to twenty of the mechanics at the Holloway factory. It is my anxious desire so to arrange that the work at the Post Office factories at Holloway and Mount Pleasant shall be, as far as possible, constant, and the fluctuations in employment reduced to a minimum.

Torpedo Practice of Submarines.

MR. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.) To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the number of shots fired, and the percentage of hits made, by each submarine boat in His Majesty's Navy when at torpedo practice during the last six months.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson*): It is not considered to be in the public interest to furnish this information.

Insanitary Condition of Bolton Post Office.

MR. GILL (Bolton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the insanitary condition of the Bolton post office, and what steps he proposes to take to remedy the state of affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) My attention has been drawn to this matter. A partial remedy has already been effected by the removal of some of the staff to outside premises; and I am now considering the question of the re-arrangement of the sanitary conveniences.

Refusal of Lord Ardilaun to Sell Holdings.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Lord Ardilaun refuses to sell to a few tenants near Killarney the agricultural holdings purchased by him with the demesne and residence of the Muckross estate, though all the other tenants on the estate have purchased their holdings under the Land Acts; and that proceedings are being constantly instituted against these tenants by Lord Ardilaun for recovery of rents in consequence of the tenants insisting on compensation for game trespass; and whether he can take any steps to protect these tenants from the consequences of Lord Ardilaun's refusal to sell their lands to them on the same terms as the rest of the estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that they have no information as to the allegations contained in the Question. It is, however, a matter of common knowledge that about eight years ago Lord Ardilaun purchased the mansion house and demesne of Muckross, comprising several thousand acres, which formed a portion of the Herbert estate, and the Land Commission understand that a few tenancies were comprised in the demesne so purchased. The remainder of the Herbert estate was sold, under the Land Purchase Acts, to the occupying tenants about six years ago. The hon. Member is aware that the existing Land Purchase Acts are based upon the principle of voluntary sale and purchase.

Estates Purchased in the Loughrea District.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many estates have been purchased by the Congested Districts Board in the Loughrea district; when were the purchases made; and when is it proposed to make a distribution of the lands.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board have acquired two small estates in the rural district of Loughrea. One of these, the Leonard estate, was vested in the Board on 6th June 1904, and will be ready for resale immediately. The other, the Burke estate, was purchased on 13th July, 1904, and will be ready for resale in the autumn of this year. The Board have also agreed to purchase portions of two other estates in this district, but the purchases have not yet been completed.

Refusal of Lord Clanricarde to sell Estate.

Mr. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have approached Lord Clanricarde to find out if he is willing to sell to them the lands, presently unoccupied and formerly in the possession of evicted tenants, with a view of having them reinstated in their old holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). I am informed that the Estates Commissioners have approached the agent of Lord Clanricarde with a view to the reinstatement of evicted tenants on his estate, but so far without result.

Sale of the De Freyne Estate.

Mr. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any representations have reached the Congested Districts Board regarding the Ballyfindon (Loughrea) portion of the De Freyne estate; and when do the Board propose to open negotiations with the tenants, with a view of enabling them to purchase their holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). The Congested Districts Board have received a Resolution on this subject from the Loughrea Rural District Council. The property in question has not yet been vested in the Board, but it is anticipated that it will become vested in them within the next three months, whereupon no time will be lost in distributing the property.

Irish Loan Fund—Amount to Credit of Loughrea.

Mr. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how much money stands to the credit of Loughrea, county Galway, in the Loan Fund Board, in Dublin, and whether any steps have been taken recently to bring the utilisation of the moneys under the notice of the Town Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). I am informed by the Loan Fund Board that the amount in their possession available for loan fund purposes in Loughrea is £581 5s. 6d. So far back as 1903 it was decided, at a meeting held in Loughrea, to establish a loan fund society; rules were adopted and a treasurer and a clerk were selected. The Loan Fund Board informed the promoters that before the money could be transferred to the proposed society it would be necessary that the officers should give statutable security. Nothing has since been done, though the Board have several times pointed out to the promoters the desirability of utilising the available money for the benefit of Loughrea. The Board have not communicated with the Town Commissioners, who have no functions in the matter.

Impersonation at West Belfast Election.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Belfast Assizes, on the 26th instant, six men were found guilty of personating voters at the recent Parliamentary election in West Belfast; whether his attention has been called to the remark of the Lord Chief Baron that he was perfectly well aware that he had not the most guilty parties before him, and that these men were the tools of somebody; and whether any attempt will be made to bring the principals in this transaction to justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). I understand that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. I have seen a newspaper report of the Lord Chief Baron's remarks to the effect mentioned, but I am informed by the police authorities that they have been unable to procure evidence incriminating any other persons than those convicted.

Rents Raised by the Chief Land Commission.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the aggregate of the amounts by which rents were raised by the Chief Land Commission for the most recent period of twelve months for which the figures are available, and, taking only the cases in which the rent was raised, what was the percentage of the increase in these cases over the rents fixed by the sub-commissions or county courts; what was the aggregate of the amounts by which rents were reduced during the same period by the Chief Commission, and, taking only the cases in which the rents were reduced, what was the percentage of the reduction under the rents fixed by the sub-commissions and county courts; and what were the number of cases in which the rents were respectively raised and reduced during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). I am informed that the records kept by the Land Commission would not enable them to give the information asked for in the manner proposed in the Question, without an examination of each of the 3,000 files of the cases determined within the past twelve months. The annual Reports of the Land Commission give very full particulars of the results of re-hearings and appeals. I invite the hon. Member's attention to the appendices in the Report for the year ending 31st March, 1905, pages 54 to 67.

Untenanted Land for Sale on the Woodrooffe Estate.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have made or will make inquiry as to the quantity of untenanted land available for sale on the Woodrooffe estate, near Lismore, county Waterford, and will make an offer for the same without delay, so as to anticipate any possible outside bidder; and whether he is aware that a number of existing tenants on this estate occupy small mountain holdings, and that the tenants who occupied the lower lands were cleared off the estate about fifty years ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have already made inquiries with regard to this estate. They found that in the year 1881 an order was made for the sale of the estate in the Land Judge's Court, but that the order for sale was eventually dismissed in the year 1900, and the estate is not now in Court. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the present owner of the estate, but will, if furnished with information on the subject, make further inquiries in the matter.

Distribution of Land on the Parker Estate, County Waterford.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have yet received a report from their inspector as to the persons to whom the untenanted lands on the Parker Estate, near Tallow, county Waterford, are to be distributed; and, if so, whether a copy of the same can be furnished.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). The Estates Commissioners have received their inspector's report on this estate, and will consider it in due course. They inform me that reports of this nature are confidential documents which cannot be made public.

Irish Land Commission—Lay Assessors.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald selects the lay assessors who sit with him on appeals to the Chief Land Commission, or whether, though nominally all the Chief Commissioners are entitled to be consulted in such selection, the suggestions as to the persons to be so appointed are usually or very often made by Mr. Fitzgerald; and whether the same circumstances apply to the selection of legal and lay Commissioners who sit on Sub-Commissions.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce*). I am informed by the Land Commission that the allocation of the assessors for the different appeal sittings is arranged by the Judicial Commissioners jointly, and not by either of them separately. The duty of assigning both legal and lay Assistant Commissioners to their particular districts has for several years past devolved on Mr. Justice Fitzgerald.

Distribution of Land at Swords, County Dublin.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Estates Commissioners have purchased some 200 acres of land, formerly belonging to Mr. Cantwell, near Swords, county Dublin; whether any of this land has been distributed amongst local farmers; whether of four evicted tenants placed in possession of parts of the property two are engaged in business in Dublin, and have since put up their holdings for sale; and whether the sale or sub-letting of the holdings in such cicumstances will be permitted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have purchased 281 acres of land from Mr. Cantwell, of which eleven acres were resold to two local farmers, and the remainder to four evicted tenants, or representatives of evicted tenants. The Commissioners have learned that two of these evicted tenants are engaged in business in Dublin, and that one of them has advertised his farm for sale but has not sold it. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with any tenant purchaser who elects to sell his interest in a holding which he has purchased under the Land Purchase Acts.

Sales of the Earl of Clonmel's Estate, County Tipperary.

Mr. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners will, in due course, carefully investigate the circumstances under which, by the issue of writs and processes against tenants owing arrears of rent, the unwilling signature of such tenants and others was obtained to agreements for the purchase of their holdings on the estate of the Earl of Clonmel, in county Tipperary, in which an originating application has been lodged with the Estates Commissioners; and whether they will also prevent the purchase of 118 acres of untenanted land on the estate by the rent-warner, in view of the fact that he has already two substantial farms, and that many tenants on the estate have holdings which are uneconomic in the vicinity of this untenanted land in which a tenancy was created only in 1905 to form a basis of sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that, when the estate in question is being inspected, the circumstances under which the tenants signed agreements to purchase will be inquired into, and that if any evidence adduced tends to show that the agreements were obtained by duress, that point will be duly considered. Inquiry will also be made into the matters of fact alleged in the latter part of the question.

Sale of the Warburton Estate, Queen's County.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Patriotic Insurance Company (now taken over by the Sun Company) are the principal mortgagees in possession of the Warburton estate, Queen's County; and whether, seeing the tenants are willing to purchase under the Act of 1903, but are debarred from doing so while the property remains in the Land Judge's Court, the Estates Commissioners will approach the insurance company with a view of having the estate dismissed from court.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand that this estate is in the possession of a receiver under the Land Judge's Court, and not of mortgagees, as stated in the Question. I have brought the Question to the notice of the Estates Commissioners, who inform me that they have no knowledge of this estate, but will make inquiries into the matter.

Sale of the Goodbody Estate near Athenry.

Mr. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will now furnish the names and residences of all those who applied to the Estates Commissioners for a portion of the Goodbody estate, near Atherny,as well as the names and residences of all those who benefited by the distribution, and the amount of land granted to each.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have already informed the hon. Member that the purchase of this property by the Estates Commissioners has not yet been completed. The Commissioners, in the exercise of their discretion, select the persons whom they consider most suitable to be allotted parcels of untenanted land, and they do not think it desirable to publish the names of all persons who may have applied to them for such land. A Return of the names of all purchasers of holdings and parcels of land is in course of preparation, and will shortly be published.

Sale of a Farm at Cloonts, Rathmore.

MR. MURPHY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the attention of the Congested Districts Board has been directed to the sale of a large farm at Cloonts, Rathmore, county Kerry, which would be suitable in connection with the operations of the Board in the adjoining congested districts; and whether the Board propose to take any steps in connection with the purchase of the farm.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board are aware that the tenant's interest in a farm at Cloonts is about to be sold, but, as it does not appear that the landlord's interest is for sale, the Board may not think it advisable to purchase the tenant's interest alone.

Irish Labourers Bill—Date of Introduction.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, when he hopes to be in a position to introduce the Irish Labourers' Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) After Easter, and I hope soon after Easter.

Governorships of Irish Prisons.

MR. McKILLOP (Armagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of vacancies for governorships and deputy governorships which have occurred in the Irish prison service during the years 1902–3, also during the years 1904–5; can he say how many of these appointments have been filled from the ranks during these years; and whether it is the intention of the Government to give a proportion of these appointments to deserving officers in the ranks.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that in the years 1902–3, twelve vacancies occurred in governorships and deputy governorships of prisons in Ireland, of which seven were filled by promotion from the ranks; and in 1904–5 two vacancies occurred, neither of which was filled from the ranks. I have already stated that there is no intention of departing from the present system of appointment, under which the claims of subordinate ranks to promotion are fully recognised.

Hours of Irish Prison Staff.

MR. McKILLOP: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of hours of duty for work performed by warders, deputy governors, and clerks in the Irish prison service for the months of July, 1905, and January, 1906, with the hours at which the officers named came on duty in the morning; and whether he can give Returns showing the records of Irish prisons in this regard, separately, and say how these Returns compare, for the months named, with those of the English prisons of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Pentonville.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the labour and expense of preparing Returns giving the particulars asked for in regard to each of the 400 officers in the Irish prison service would be very considerable, and I am not aware that any good purpose would be served by the compilation of such Returns. The Irish Prisons Board have no information in regard to the English prisons named.

Army Meat Contracts.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any instructions were issued by the late Government that the supplies of meat to the Army should be drawn as far as possible from colonial sources; if so, whether these instructions have resulted in preventing British subjects who deal in foreign meat from tendering on equal terms with other British subjects who deal in colonial meat; and whether he will give orders that for the future all tenders are to be treated on equal terms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) From June, 1901, onwards our contracts stipulated as regards fresh meat that it should be home bred, as regards frozen meat (mutton only is used) that it should be colonial. The former restriction has been removed.

Purchase of Farm at Stobs Camp.

Sir J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that before the expiry of their leases, but at a break thereof, three farmers will have to give up their farms, namely, Mr. Brydon, farming about 600 acres at Winnington Rig; Mr. Jackson, farming about 300 acres at Acre Knowe, and Mr. Richardson, farming about 150 acres at Newmill, all three farms being within the Stobs Camp estate; and that these farmers have to remove about 1,000 sheep and horned cattle and their implements; will he say whether all the three farms are to be leased to one person; and, if so, whether, considering the demand for moderate-sized farms in the county of Roxburgh, the three farmers can be retained on the Stobs Camp estate at present, and arrangements made to prevent the smaller farms being joined into one in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The land was purchased as a manœuvring ground for troops, and it has accordingly been found necessary to convert three farms of pasture and arable land into one of purely pasture. The extent of this portion of the estate is not sufficient to admit of the profitable farming of three purely pastoral holdings. All the three tenants had the opportunity of tendering for the tenancy of the combined farm, but their tenders were far below that which was accepted.

Fishing Permits at Stobs Camp.

Sir J. JARDINE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any inconvenience to the arrangements of the camp at Stobs would result from allowing freer access to the public to fish for trout in the four miles of the river Slitrig, than is permitted by the notice issued by Colonel Hippisley, chief engineer, Scottish Command, dated 1st March, 1906; what number of permits will be issued under that order; and whether the fee of 5s. therefor can be reduced to a sum more within the means of the poorer classes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I have this Question under consideration, and cannot as yet give an Answer. Various points relating to the effect of throwing open the fishing on the stock of trout, both in the Stobs waters and in the other waters of the Slitrig, have to be considered, and these are engaging my attention.

Highland Volunteer Regiments.

Mr. AINSWORTH: (Argyllshire) To ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware how far the efficiency of Volunteer Artillery corps in Highland counties is affected by the fact that the guns are generally of an obsolete type; that there is a difficulty in getting adjutants owing to the distances to be covered and the travelling and hotel expenses; that the difference between the camp and efficiency allowance is not sufficient to induce camp training to the requisite extent; and whether he will be prepared to favourably consider what can be done and to make a statement on the subject at as early a date as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the future role of the Volunteer Artillery, as a whole, is at present receiving my very careful consideration, and I can assure my hon friend that the points raised by him will not be lost sight of. I must, however, point out that such consideration will take time, and that I may not be able to make a statement on the subject as early as he anticipates.

Vaccination of Devonport Garrison.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a direction has been issued to the effect that the officers and men of the garrison at Devonport are to be revaccinated; if so, whether this Order applies indiscriminately to all officers and men, including those who have already been re-vaccinated; and whether officers and men who have a conscientious objection to vaccination will be exempted from the operation of this Order.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) My hon. friend appears to have been somewhat misinformed. No special orders have been issued. The usual annual vaccination inspection is now being carried out in accordance with Paragraph 566 of the Medical Services Regulations.

Structural Alteration to Provide Detention Barracks.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is anticipated that structural alterations will be required in any barracks in Great Britain to provide detention prisons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No, Sir. The existing military prisons, with the exception of Dover, and possibly the Curragh, will become detention barracks.

Detention Prisons—India and the Colonies.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed that the system of detention prisons or barracks shall be extended to the Army in India, the Colonies, and the Dependencies of the Crown.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The system of detention barracks will apply to all troops to whom the Army Act applies.

Army—Military and Civil Offences.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: To ask the Secretary of State for War what proportion of offences in the Army during the last three years, respectively, were what are technically known as military offences.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The proportion of military offences dealt with by court martial to civil offences so dealt with, is about 90 per cent. to 10 per cent.

Reduction of British Garrison in North China.

Sir CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the intention of the Government to reduce the number of British troops in Tientsin and Peking.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The question of the reduction of the foreign troops in outlying districts in North China is now under consideration, but this will not, for the present, affect the number of the legation guard at Peking.

British Emigrants to Canada.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many persons have emigrated from the United Kingdom to Canada each year during the last seven years; and what percentage of homesteads taken west of Winnipeg have been abandoned during that period owing to the inability of the occupier to cultivate the land for a sufficient time, viz., three years, to enable him to secure the Government patent or title deeds.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The following number of persons emigrated from the United Kingdom to Canada as declared settlers during the last seven years for which information is available:—1898 (calendar year), 11,608; 1899 (calendar year), 10,660; 1900 (calendar year), 10,360; 1901 (six months ended 30th June), 11,810; 1901–2, 17,259; 1902–3, 41,792; 1903–4, 50,374. No homesteads have been abandoned in the north-west of Canada for the reason mentioned by the hon. Member. Possibly a very small percentage of abandonments has occurred on account of the holders being unable to perform the residential qualification prescribed by the Canadian Lands Act.

Gold Output of Transvaal Mines.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give, month for month, for 1905 and for the months of January, February, and March, 1906, the gold output of the mines of the Transvaal; the number of the native labourers; the number of Chinese coolies; and the number of white men engaged in mining operations in that colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The figures required are as follows:—

Period.	Whites Employed.	Coloured Employed.	Chinese Employed.	Output.
				£
January 1905 - -	15,536	89,895	27,222	1,578,847
February ,, - -	15,831	97,882	31,424	1,557,291
March ,, - -	16,225	105,184	34,335	1,699,991
April ,, - -	16,232	107,756	35,575	1,712,071
May ,, - -	16,676	106,864	38,111	1,767,438
June ,, - -	16,989	104,902	41,340	1,760,044
July ,, - -	17,170	103,623	43,191	1,778,112
August ,, - -	17,429	100,081	44,609	1,836,172
September ,, - -	17,794	97,721	44,538	1,763,973
October ,, - -	18,359	96,392	45,956	1,761,798
November ,, - -	18,125	96,283	45,856	1,799,595
December ,, - -	18,159	93,831	47,267	1,837,809
January 1906 - -	18,532	93,933	47,166	1,824,983
February ,, - -	18,529	93,843	50,000	1,731,664*
March ,, - -	(Figures	not yet	received.)	

* This figure is that of the Chamber of Mines.

Land Purchased by Scottish Congest District Board.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the quantity of land purchased by the Congested Districts Board, since its establishment and up to the present time, in each of the Highland crofting counties, giving the name of the parish in which such lands are situated, their nature, the amount paid, and the name of the proprietor to whom the money was paid; indicating in each case the manner in which the lands have been disposed of by the board, the sum expended on the respective lands by the board, and the amount repaid to the board by the tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I would refer the hon. Member to the Report of the Congested Districts Board for 1904–5, which contains most of the information which he desires. It will be brought up to date in the report of the present year, which will be issued as soon as possible.

Phraseology of the Land Tenure (Scotland) Bill.

Sir J. JARDINE: To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has satisfied himself that the phraseology of the Land Tenure Bill is in accordance with other enactments applying to Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am advised that the phraseology of the Bill would not be unintelligible in relation to Scotch tenancies, and no doubt it will receive amendment in Committee.

Publication of Volume IV. of Ormonde MSS.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state when volume IV. of the Ormonde MSS., now in the press, will be published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Answered by Mr. McKenna.) It is not possible to say definitely, but I hope soon.

Discharges at East Islington Telegraph Factory.

Mr. RADFORD (Islington, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether employees at the Postal Telegraph Factory, East Islington, have recently been given notice to leave, and others placed on half-time; and, if so, what is the reason of the reduction in the number of employees, and of the partial unemployment of those still in the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*): I fear I can add nothing to the reply which I made on the 29th ultimo to the hon. Member for the Clitheroe Division.†

Postal Transmission of Cancer Specimens.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Postmaster-General why dead specimens of cancer, preserved in a non-deleterious fluid, have been declared to be forbidden admittance to the post, and why certain specimens, addressed to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, were ordered to be destroyed immediately on their arrival in this country from abroad; whether the absolutely innocuous nature of these specimens, as compared with living cultures of bacteria, unpreserved diseased tissues, or pathological products generally, was stated in the inquiries addressed by the General Post Office in 1905, to the French and German postal administrations, and what are the terms of the replies received; and whether he will take steps at the postal congress to secure the facilities of the post, which are essential to international collaboration, again being made available for investigators at home and abroad, engaged in the study of cancer.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) With a view to the protection of the public and of post office servants the regulations of the foreign and colonial post forbid the transmission of dangerous articles, and require their destruction if found in the post. Pathological products generally have been regarded as coming under this prohibition, since many of them are undoubtedly of a highly dangerous character, and it is difficult for postal servants to distinguish between those which are harmful and those which are innocuous. The cancer specimens addressed to the Cancer Research Fund are, I am informed on the highest authority, harmless; and, as I am assured that the use of the post is of great importance for the successful prosecution of the researches of the fund, I hope to be able to make a special exception in their favour. I think it desirable, however, that the matter should be discussed with the delegates of the countries principally concerned, at the approaching postal congress, and I have instructed the British delegates accordingly. In the meantime packets addressed to the Cancer Research Fund will be delivered.

London Telegraph and Sorting Offices—Superior Appointments.

Mr. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the number of superior appointments attached to the telegraph and sorting forces in London respectively; what percentage these posts bear to the general staff employed; and whether the actual rate of promotion from the staff is on an equality, in view of the statements made by departmental officials that the pay and prospects of telegraphists and sorters are similar.

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† See Column 129.

(*Answered by Sydney Buxton.*) The members of the higher posts to which telegraphists and sorters may rise in the normal course of promotion are 422 and 670 respectively, and the proportions which these numbers bear to the total numbers of telegraphists and sorters are 1 to 4·8 or 20·7 per cent., and 1 to 8·5 or 11·8 per cent. These figures do not include female telegraphists. The scales of pay of telegraphists and sorters are the same. I am not aware of any authoritative statement having been made to the effect that their prospects are similar.

Telegraph Office at Gortahork, county Donegal.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can arrange to establish a telegraph office at Gortahork, county Donegal, having regard to the number of telegrams which are despatched from and received in this district during the annual herring fishery, and also to the fact that the telegraph wires are already laid so as to pass through the village within fifty yards of the existing post office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am having inquiry made, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Conveyance of Mails between Carrigart and Creeslough.

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the tender of Mr. Michael Kiely, of Carrigart, county Donegal, for the conveyance of mails between Carrigart and Creeslough, was accepted and the bail bond perfected in 1905, but that Mr. Kiely has since received no communication from the postal authorities respecting it; and if he can state the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am making inquiry on this subject, and will communicate with the hon. Member in due course.

Regulations under the Employment of Children Act.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the small number of local authorities who have made bye-laws under the Employment of Children Act, he will consider the desirability of issuing a circular to county and borough councils, intimating their powers under the Act and the advantage of framing regulations to restrict the labour of children.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The number is not so very small; out of 329 authorities who could make bye-laws under the Act 74 have done so or are taking steps to do so. Of the remainder some sixty are the councils of counties where the need for bye-laws imposing restrictions, beyond the restrictions contained in the Act itself, is not so strong as in thickly populated districts; and probably the same is the case in some of the smaller boroughs and urban districts. Several large cities, moreover, already have street trading bye-laws under their local Acts. At the time of the passing of the Act, the Home Office issued an explanatory circular to all the authorities concerned. I propose to revise this circular, in the light of information which has been collected as to the working of the bye-laws already made, and issue it to the authorities later on. When the time comes for doing this, a recommendation on the lines suggested by my hon. friend is certainly a matter for consideration.

Indian Viceroy and Deputations of the People's Congress.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will advise the Governor General of India to receive such deputations as the People's Congress may appoint to lay before him any resolutions or measures which they believe to be in the interest of their country.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am confident that the Governor General of India will be inclined to give a sympathetic hearing to any person or collections of persons having a fair and reasonable claim to be heard. As to the recognition of such persons, he will no doubt exercise his discretion, and, as at present advised, I see no reason for taking any initiative in the matter.

Uneconomic Holdings in the Donaghpatrick Division.

Mr. RICHARD HAZELTON (Galway, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the Donaghpatrick electoral division, in the union of Tuam, containing 3,938 acres, with a population of 809 there are 130 holdings, rated under £8 valuation, of not more than ten acres each; and whether it is possible to have this division scheduled, with a view to the enlargement of its uneconomic holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the facts are correctly stated in the Question, save that the population, according to the census of 1901, is 722, and that the number of holdings of the kind mentioned is 115. There is no power to schedule any additional electoral divisions as congested districts, the power given by the 36th section of the Act of 1891 having lapsed.

Allotment of Land on the Rosslodge Estate.

Mr. RICHARD HAZELTON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Congested Districts Board, in making allotments of the untenanted land on the Rosslodge property, in the county of Galway, to give preference to holders of uneconomic holdings adjoining the property; whether the occupiers of these holdings are scheduled in a congested area; and if the Congested Districts Board, in making these allotments, will have consideration for the individual necessities of the small holders in the parish.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The property in question, which is situated in a non-congested district, has been purchased by the Congested Districts Board for the benefit of the occupiers of small holdings in congested districts. The powers and policy of the board in relation to property so purchased are fully stated in my Reply to a similar Question of the hon. Member for North Roscommon on 12th March.†

Irish Technical Instruction Grant.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the £3,500 of the £7,000 until recently granted annually for the purposes of technical instruction in Ireland and voted from Imperial funds, is now charged on the Development Grant for Ireland.

(*Answered by McKenna.*) I must refer the hon. Baronet to the debate on this subject, in which he took part, on the 24th February, 1904.‡ I have nothing to add to what was said on that occasion by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer and my predecessor, except to state that, the period having elapsed during which this £3,500 was allowed to be retained on the Vote for the Department of Agriculture, the sum is no longer provided in that Vote, but has been transferred to the Development Grant.

Cost of Preparation of Irish Voters' and Jurors' Lists.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, in the event of the Government proposing to amend the Local Government (Ireland) Act, he will deal with the question of the preparation of the voters' and jurors lists, the expense of which is now regarded as excessive, and so amend the law as to leave the fixing of the remuneration for this work to the discretion of the Irish county councils, instead of fixing it, as at present, by statutory fee.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer the hon. Baronet to my Reply to the Question of the hon. Member for South Wexford on the 28th February.§ The Local Government Board are of opinion that, having regard to the important character of the duties to be discharged, the fees fixed by the Board in pursuance of the Parliamentary

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 882–3.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 910 *et seq.*

§ See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1145.

Registration Expenses Act, 1890, for the preparation of the franchise lists are not excessive.

Motor Service from Enniscorthy to Wexford.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the county council of county Wexford carried out, in 1904, the suggestions made by the promoters of the Pirrie-Iveagh motor scheme for the establishment of a return motor service from Enniscorthy to Wexford via Oulart, Kilmuckridge, Blackwater, and Castlebridge; and, in view of the fact that the proposed service would pass through an extensive tillage district, whose inhabitants would be benefited thereby, he will use his influence with the promoters of the scheme to revive it as far as county Wexford is concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to the Question of the hon. Member for East Clare on the 19th March.† I understand that the Wexford County Council were prepared to meet the requirements of the motor transit scheme so far as the route mentioned in the Question was concerned, but, as I have already indicated, the promoters were unwilling to deal with the scheme otherwise than as a whole. The Government would gladly do everything which might be possible to further the scheme if it should be revived, but I think the first step in the matter should be taken by the county councils.

Illegal Trawling in Irish Waters.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a letter from Mr. Frank Farley, of Manchester, with reference to the illegal practices of steam trawlers in Irish waters, and to the daily consignments to the Manchester fish market of immature whiting from the Irish coast; and whether he will take any, and, if so, what steps to protect the Irish fishing industry in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The attention of the Department of Agriculture has been directed to the letter of Mr. Farley in which it is assumed that steam trawling within the three-mile limit off the Irish coast is, in all cases, illegal. Steam trawling, however, is illegal in those areas only in which it is prohibited by bye-law. The Department consider that steam trawling in contravention of such bye-laws without detection is not of frequent occurrence. The areas legally fished by steam trawlers in extra-territorial waters off the Irish coast are well known to the Department, and they have no reason to believe that any of the immature whiting alleged to be landed at Fleetwood are taken by steam trawling in those Irish waters in which that method of fishing has been made illegal by bye-law.

Construction of Railway from Westport to Achill Sound.

Dr. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the cost of the construction of the railway from Westport, county Mayo, to Achill Sound; who supplied the cost; has the line been presented, free of cost, to the Midland Great Western Railway Company of Ireland; is it leased by the Midland Company; and, if so, what are the terms of the lease.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The railway from Westport to Achill Sound consisted of two undertakings, viz.:—Westport to Mallaranny Railway, Privy Council Order, 1890; Achill Extension Railway, Privy Council Order, 1894. The cost in both cases was, in the main, met out of moneys provided by Parliament, in pursuance of the Railways Acts, 1889 and 1893, the grant for the first undertaking being £131,400, and for the second undertaking £72,578, making a total of £203,978. The first line was constructed by the Midland Great Western Railway Company, who reported that, in addition to providing the necessary rolling stock, they spent £20,000 over and above the amount of the grant; the second line was constructed by the Board of Works by contract. Under agreements between the Treasury and the company, both lines were absorbed by, and now form an integral part of the system of, the Midland Great Western Railway Company, the conditions being that they shall be worked, managed, and maintained in an efficient and substantial manner, and that there shall be run at least two trains each way carrying passengers (and in case mixed trains are not allowed by the Board of Trade), one goods train also on week days.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 89, 90, 91.

Drainage of Lough Neagh—Rent-charges.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the excessive amount of the rent-charges payable to the Board of Public Works in connection with the drainage of Lough Erne, having regard to the reduction of rents; whether he is aware that the Land Commission, in fixing fair rents, disregard, and properly so, the estimate of the Board of Works of the improvement of land resulting from the drainage works, and fix the rents at figures which in many cases result in the proprietors paying more in respect of the lands than they receive in rent; and whether the rent-charges could be reduced and a longer period allowed for repayment of the loan.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The rent-charges referred to are those required to pay the interest and principal of the advances made by the State to the Lough Erne drainage district, for which the owners of benefited lands are liable. Such rent-charges are usually fixed on the basis of a 5 per cent. annuity for thirty-five years, covering the repayment of principal and interest at the rate of 3½ per cent., but the Lough Erne district was one of those entitled to the specially favourable terms of The Public Works Loans Act, 1889, viz., 3⅛ per cent. and an extended term of forty-nine years. I cannot therefore regard the rent-charges as excessive, and I am not prepared to relax the terms. It is not the case that the Land Commissioners disregard the estimate of the Board of Works of the improvement of the land resulting from the drainage works. The Commissioners, it is true, are not bound by such estimate, but when it is given in evidence they always consider it in framing their estimate of the gross fair rent. I am not aware of any case in which the fair rent of a holding has been fixed at a less amount than the drainage charge payable in connection with the Lough Erne drainage works.

Compension Claims against the Armagh, Keady and Castleblaney Railway Company—Award of Arbitrator.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the arbitrator who sat in the Armagh Court House on 10th May, 1904, to deal with compensation claims against the Armagh, Keady, and Castleblaney Railway Company for the compulsory acquiring of certain lands, has yet issued his final award; and, if not, will he explain the cause of delay.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. I am informed that the railway company desired to take certain action involving the necessity of another meeting, for which they found difficulty in arranging.

Royal Irish Constabulary and Religious Demonstrations.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, in view of the fact that under the Royal Irish Constabulary code, members of the force are debarred while in uniform from taking part in open-air religious propaganda, his attention has been called to the action of Sergeant John Hook, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed in the town of Antrim, who, on the 16th September last, took part in a religious open-air meeting in that town, and delivered a speech opposite the residence of two Catholics calculated to give offence to Catholic residents of the town; and whether, in view of the fact that this man has served his full time in the Royal Irish Constabulary, he will consider the advisability of retiring him on his pension, or else take steps to have him removed to some other district where his religious activity will not be a matter of offence to the residents.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are forbidden to give expression to political or sectarian opinions. I am informed that on the date mentioned Sergeant Hook, who was on leave of absence and in plain clothes, attended an open-air religious meeting in the street at Antrim and spoke a few words upon the invitation of the evangelist who conducted the meeting. It is the fact that two Catholics reside near the place of meeting. The Inspector-General inquired into the matter at the time, but did not feel called upon to take any action beyond directing the sergeant's attention to the rule. The sergeant is stated to be a zealous and efficient officer, and no breach of the rule has since occurred. It is not intended to remove him from Antrim.

Sale of the Dunne Estate, Aughaboe.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have yet acquired the untenanted land on the Dunne estate, Aughaboe, Queen's County; and, seeing the land is urgently required for redistribution amongst small holders in the locality, will he see that the Commissioners do not withdraw their offer.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the registrar of the Land Judge's Court that the offer made by the Estates Commissioners for the untenanted land on this estate was not as advantageous for the persons interested in the estate as the offers made by two of the owners namely, Mrs. Dunne and Colonel Dunne and another person. The Commissioners, therefore, at the instance of the Land Judge, withdrew their offer, and the offers of the persons referred to were accepted.

Distribution of Untenanted Lands on the Estate of Mr. R. Kelly, Rockmore.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have purchased the property of Mr. Raymond Kelly, Rockmore, near Athenry; can he state how many tenants are on the property, and the yearly rental of each; and, before any distribution is made of the untenanted lands on this estate, will the Commissioners conside the claims of the tenants with a view of enlarging their holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have made an offer to the Land Judge for the purchase of the estate referred to, and in the event of its acceptance the Commissioners propose to divide the untenanted land among the tenants on the estate. The Commissioners are not at present prepared to give the information asked for in the second part of the Question. The time of their staff is so fully occupied in endeavouring to cope with their large and increasing work, that it would be a serious injury to that work were they to detach clerks for the purpose of compiling any statistics except such as are of real importance.

Dublin Royal College of Science—Use of Ballinasloe Limestone.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give instructions to those responsible for making out the specification for building the College of Science in Dublin that the superior quality of the Ballinasloe limestone shall be taken into account.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The architects of the Royal College of Science have lately been making a special study of Irish building materials, and have come to the conclusion that, subject to prices being satisfactory, large quantities of them can be used in the building. It would not, however, be possible at this stage to state what particular stone will be employed.

Arklow Harbour Improvements.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the date by which the plans of the proposed works for the improvement of Arklow Harbour must be submitted to the Government, with a view to the introduction of the necessary legislation this Session.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The sooner the plans are submitted and approved, the sooner legislation can be introduced, but I am afraid that I cannot fix a date.

Discharge of F. Metherell, Royal Garrison Artillery.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Frederick Metherell, until December, 1904, a second-class master gunner, Royal Garrison Artillery, was called upon in that month by the General Officer commanding at Portsmouth to claim his discharge, in consequence of a confidential report furnished by the officer commanding No. 16 Company, Royal Garrison Artillery; and whether, in view of the fact that Metherell was subsequently given an exemplary character, both upon his discharge certificate and upon a document enabling him to seek civil employment, he will permit him to rejoin the Army and serve on the necessary two years to complete twenty-five years service for pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The circumstances under which this warrant officer was granted an exemplary character on discharge are being made the subject of inquiry.

Promotions in Army Accounts Department.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether in the case of two recent promotions in the Army Accounts Department, the officers then passed over were given equal opportunities of displaying their efficiency; who was responsible for these selections; and whether, as both officers promoted were at the time serving in offices controlled by civilian accountants, paragraph 214a, King's Regulations, was adhered to.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is impossible in any profession to guarantee equal opportunities to everyone, but every possible endeavour is made in the Army Accounts Department to give a trial on superior work to those who show promise. The selections in question were made by the Finance Member of Council. The promotions were not made merely upon the recommendations of those under whom the officers concerned were serving at the time. The whole of their previous records were carefully considered. Paragraph 214a of the King's Regulations was observed as far as it applied.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether staff paymasters appointed chief accountants or accountants, above their seniors in the Army Pay Department, will receive promotion to chief paymaster on a vacancy occurring, prior to such officers, who under ordinary conditions would have received first consideration; and, if so, in view of the fact that such action will in some instances, through the operation of the age clause, prevent any further promotion, is it intended to compensate officers thus affected.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Staff paymasters are not ordinarily appointed chief accountants. In the one case in which such an exceptional promotion has been made, the grounds which justified this exceptional selection naturally justify selection for chief paymaster. As promotion to this rank was always by selection, no question of compensation arises. Staff paymasters appointed accountants would not as a necessary consequence be selected for chief paymasters.

Army Accounts Department—Civil and Military Officials.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds is it thought desirable for officers holding His Majesty's Commission to be reported on by civilians, who, in some cases, are not acquainted with those reported on, seeing that the change is not in accordance with the rules of the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The efficiency of the members of every Department must obviously be reported on by those under whom they serve. As the Army Accounts Branch is composed partly of military and partly of civilian accountants, it naturally follows that in some cases the first have to be reported upon by the second. I may add that cases of purely military discipline are referred to the Adjutant-General.

The Judge Advocate-General.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Judge Advocate-General is a perma ent member of the Civil Service; if so, who made him one, and by what authority; if not, whether he holds his office *durante bene placito*, or *quamdiu se bene gesserit*; with whom the power of dismissing him rests; whether in the event of dismissal he would have any claim for compensation; and, if so, against whom the claim would be enforced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Judge Advocate-General was made a permanent member of the Civil Service by gazetting the office to Schedule B of the Order in Council of 4th June 1870 on the authority of the Treasury. His appointment has been constituted by letters patent, and the power of dismissal therefore rests with His Majesty. According to the personal arrangement made with Mr. Milvain in August, 1905, he gave up the two appointments of the temporal chancellorship of the county palatine of Durham and the recordership of Bradford, in consideration of the assurance that, subject to continued efficiency, he should hold his office to the age of seventy. Probably in the event of dismissal for any other cause than inefficiency he would prefer a claim against the Treasury.

Officers' Quarters at Crown Hill Barracks, Plymouth.

Lord J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether there are sufficient quarters at Crown Hill Barracks, Plymouth, for all the officers of the battalion stationed there; and, if not, why lodging allowances are not issued to those officers who consequently live out.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are not quite sufficient quarters at Crown Hill Barracks for the officers of the battalion stationed there. A certain number of the officers are allotted quarters within a convenient distance of those barracks, and therefore lodging money is not admissible to them.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Ex-Captain of the Cruiser "Kent."

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether the First Lord of the Admiralty is aware that the captain of the cruiser "Kent," whom Lord Cawdor, the late First Lord of the Admiralty, in May last, on receiving the Report of the Rear-Admiral commanding the First Cruiser Squadron and that of a court of inquiry, decided at once to suspend and place on half-pay, in consequence of a ragging incident on board the cruiser "Kent" on 2nd May, in which a midshipman, who was about, in consequence of the sentence of a mock court-martial, to be flogged by the senior midshipmen, took out a revolver which he used to protect himself from violence at the hands of his brother midshipmen, who were unrestrained in their violence by their superior officers; whether, in view of the fact that the officer thus superseded in the command of the cruiser "Kent," in consequence of this incident on 18th May, was on 14th August, three days after the prorogation of the late Parliament, appointed to the command of the battleship "Canopus," which is a more important command and with higher emoluments than the post from which he was superseded; is this gentleman still in the command of the "Canopus;" and, if so, whether, having regard to the circumstances, the Government intend to take any and, if any, what action in the matter.

*The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): The Board of Admiralty considered that the case was fully met by the supersession of the officer referred to from the command of a ship for a period of three months. The command of the "Canopus" carries no higher emoluments than that of the "Kent." The date of the prorogation of Parliament had no bearing on the date of this or any other officer's appointment.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why was not Parliament told that this captain was only to be superseded for three months.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot say.

Navy Meat Contracts.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether any instructions were issued by the late Government that the supplies of meat to the Navy should be drawn as far as possible from Colonial sources; if so, whether these instructions have resulted in preventing British subjects who deal in Foreign meat from tendering on equal terms with other British subjects who deal in Colonial meat; and whether he will give orders that for the future all tenders are to be treated on equal terms.

* Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: In the case of certain contracts, extending over a period of years, for supplies of meat to be used in time of war, it was decided by the late Board to specify Colonial meat only; but in the case of of all other contracts tenders have been invited for supplies both from Colonial and Foreign sources, and all tenders have been, and will be, treated on equal terms.

His Majesty's Ship "Dreadnought."

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether he can state the total cost of the "Dreadnought;" and whether her construction will necessitate any extra expenditure on ports and docks; and, if so, whether he can state the estimated amount of such expenditure.

* Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: My hon. friend will find the information he desires as to the estimated cost of the "Dreadnought" at page 197 of the Navy Estimates. The total cost is £1,797,497, which includes £113,200 for guns. An expenditure of about £17,000 has been incurred at Portsmouth for alterations to the building slip and the erection of a gantry. These additional works will, however, be available and were required for future ships. No other expenditure on works has been necessitated by the construction of this vessel.

Naval Manœuvres—Insurance Scheme.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the insurances effected by the Admiralty against losses arising through the proposed extraordinary naval manœuvres cover losses of life; and, if so, whether any and what estimate has been formed of the probable loss of life.

* Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: As I have already stated, in reply to a former Question on this subject, the insurance is intended to cover all liabilities which shipowners participating in the manœuvres may incur in consequence of their co-operation. There is no reason to anticipate any loss of life, and had the Admiralty believed that the scheme of the manœuvres was likely to involve any risk to life or limb beyond the ordinary risks inseparable from the seamen's profession, they would never have invited the co-operation of the mercantile marine.

Navy Contracts.

Mr. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the fair wages clause, which is inserted in all naval works contracts, applies also to sub-contracts entered into by the contractor, or only to the wages of men directly employed and paid by the contractor.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton): The fair wages clause applies to sub-contracts as well as to main contracts.

Portland Cement.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if it is stipulated in Government contracts that all Portland cement used by their works should be what is technically known as artificial Portland cement, and that the so-called natural Portland cement is excluded from all contracts.

Mr. LAMBERT: Admiralty contracts stipulate that the Portland cement used shall be what is technically known as artificial Portland cement.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps, if any, have been taken to inform the Chinese labourers in the Transvaal that they are free to return to China should they so desire.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State is still in communication with the Governor.

Mr. LIDDLE (Down, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the offer of His Majesty's Government to repatriate the Chinese coolies employed in the Transvaal Colony, under the Chinese Labour Ordinance, at the expense of the Imperial Exchequer, has been communicated to the coolies; if so, when was the communication made; and if the Colonial Office has received any, and, if so, how many acceptances from the coolies of the offer of His Majesty's Government to secure their free passages to their homes in China.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I have to refer the hon. Member to the Answer I have just given to the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy District.

Mr. LIDDLE: Surely some information ought to be forthcoming. The Question has been on the Paper many days.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The policy of the Government with regard to the repatriation of these coolies is being carried out by Lord Selborne and obviously he is the only person from whom a definite statement can be obtained.

East African Protectorate.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Draft Ordinance, which it is proposed to substitute for the Indian Procedure Codes in the East African Protectorate, will contain any provision protecting persons of European and American descent from trial in the criminal courts of the Protectorate before native juries.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It is proposed to insert in the Ordinance a provision that, in the cases referred to, not less than two-thirds of the jury shall be white men.

South African Republic and Legal Definition of "Native."

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any law of the late South African Republic, or any judicial decision given by the judges of that Republic, under which the word native is applied to persons neither born in South Africa nor descended from South African races; and what was the definition of the word native laid down by the South African Native Affairs Commission.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member is of course aware that the laws of the South African Republic and the decisions of their Judges were couched in the Dutch language. I do not know to what word the hon. Member refers when he use the English word "native" but the word "Kleurling" which was commonly used in the legislation of the late South African Republic is defined, *e.g.*, in the liquor law, as covering Asiatics as well as Africans, and as far as I am aware was so interpreted by the courts. The definition given by the Native Affairs Commission is "an aboriginal inhabitant of Africa south of the Equator and includes half castes and their descendants by natives."

Brussels Sugar Convention.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if His Majesty's Government has received any official representations complaining that injury has resulted to the West Indian Colonies from the fact that Great Britain is a signatory to the Brussels Convention.

Mr. CHURCHILL: No one has ever suggested that the Brussels Sugar Convention has produced or was likely to produce injury to the West Indies. On the contrary, the West Indies have benefitted by the Convention and were intended to benefit by it. It is, however, necessary to rember that the conclusive argument against the Convention is the widespread loss and injury inflicted upon the British commerce and British manufacturer.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: May I ask the hon. Gentleman if he will call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the first part of that Answer?

Mr. CHURCHILL: There is no reason to assume that the Board of Trade is not fully acquainted with the Sugar Bounties Convention in all its aspects.

Crime in British East Africa.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what cases of serious crime by European

British subjects in British East Africa would have had to be tried at Bombay if Chapter 33 of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure had been extended to that Protectorate, having regard to the fact that a High Court of East Africa, with full jurisdiction over all persons and matters in East Africa, was established by Order in Council in 1902, and in view of the fact that Chapter 33 of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure does not create any special judicial officer to carry out its provisions apart from the rest of the Act.

MR. CHURCHILL: Since the establishment of the High Court of East Africa by the East Africa Order in Council, 1902, the grounds upon which Chapter 33 of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure was excluded from application to the Protectorate by the East Africa Order in Council, 1897, have ceased to hold good, and all cases of serious crime by European British subjects have been and are cognisable by the High Court of East Africa and not by that of Bombay. I would remind my hon. friend that I have already informed him that an enactment is being prepared on the subject of the courts and their procedure.

British Colonial Statutes.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will have prepared and placed in the library a Chronological Table and Index to the Statutes in force in the various British Colonies, similar to the Chronological Table and Index to the Statutes published for the United Kingdom.

MR. CHURCHILL: I regret that the time, labour, and expense involved in the proposal of the hon. Member render the project in present circumstances impossible. If the hon. Gentleman would care to call at the Colonial Office by appointment all the difficulties inseparable from his proposal could be explained at length.

Ceylon Pearl Fisheries.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government has sanctioned a lease of the Government pearl fisheries of Ceylon to a private syndicate; and, if so, what are the principal conditions of the lease; whether the proposal originated with the Government of Ceylon; and what opportunity was afforded the Legislative Council for the discussion of the terms of the lease.

MR. CHURCHILL: In 1904 a syndicate submitted proposals to the Colonial Office for leasing these pearl fisheries for a term of years, and their proposals were submitted to the Ceylon Government in December of that year. The idea of leasing the fisheries commended itself to the Governor, and a draft lease was prepared and sent home for consideration. After somewhat lengthy negotiations with the syndicate, in which the Governor assisted during his visit to England, the lease as modified was, by a despatch dated December 1st last, referred to the Colony to be submitted to the Legislative Council for its acceptance or rejection, and I understand that the Ordinance sanctioning the execution of the lease has been passed. The principal conditions of the lease are as follows:—Term 20 years; capital of company £165,000; annual rent Rs. 310,000; the company to expend each year from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 150,000 as Government may require on the improvement of the pearl banks; Government to be re-imbursed the amount spent on policing, sanitation, and hospital expenses at the fishery camp, and on certain plant. The details of the lease having been the subject of prolonged negotiations both in Ceylon and in this country, the Council were invited to accept or reject the measure as a whole, and the Ordinance for that purpose passed through the usual stages.

SIR J. JARDINE: May I ask whether Mr. Lyttelton offered this lease for tender or competition?

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not think that this lease was put out to tender or competition in the ordinary sense; but the whole transaction was carried through under the late Government, and by the time Lord Elgin assumed office only the terminal stage of the negotiations—namely, the passage of the Ordinance through the Legislative Council—remained to be completed.

The Sentences on Natal Natives.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what were the irregularities upon which the Government has relied in abrogating the sentence, under martial law, inflicted upon natives convicted of murdering British officials.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am not aware of sentences inflicted upon natives convicted of murdering British officials which have been abrogated by His Majesty's Government.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Were there any irregularities in the sentences which were postponed owing to the action of the Government?

Mr. CHURCHILL asked for notice of the Question.

The Court-Martial on Natal Kaffirs.

Mr. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how many officers composed the court-martial in Natal which sentenced certain Kaffirs to execution; how long the court martial lasted; if evidence was given by native or colonial witnesses; and, if so, by how many.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: A telegram has to-day been received from the Governor of Natal stating that the court-martial was composed of the following five officers:—Lieutenant-Colonel Weighton, V.D., Natal Carbineers, President; Lieutenant-Colonel Hair, V.D., Natal Carbineers; Major W. Knott, Reserve of Officers; Captain H. P. Capstick, Natal Royal Regiment; Lieutenant H. L. Pybus, Natal Field Artillery; the court-martial lasted from March 12th to March 19th, inclusive; the evidence of twelve European and twenty-one native witnesses was taken.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Not a single officer of the Regular Army?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: No officer of the Regular Army was engaged.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-upon-Trent): Arising out of that Answer, may I ask whether the natives who were alleged to have murdered an inspector were not themselves murdered?

[No Answer was returned.]

The "Imperial Veto."

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can assure the House that the authorities of the Transvaal, Orange River, and Cape Colonies approve of the exercise of the Imperial veto in revising sentences duly inflicted by courts martial during native risings.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The authorities of the Transvaal, Orange River, and Cape Colonies have not been consulted upon the exercise upon sentences inflicted by courts martial of what my hon. friend is pleased to term the Imperial veto; nor is this surprising in view of the fact that no such Imperial veto has been exercised in regard to any such sentences.

Protection of White Residents in Natal.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): On behalf of the hon. Member for Staffordshire, Burton, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps he is taking to ensure that the position of white residents in outlying districts of Natal shall be safeguarded.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The Government of Natal is taking such steps as it thinks proper and the matter is one entirely within its competence. But I should add that at the earnest solicitation of the Government of Natal His Majesty's Government permitted the 2nd Battalion of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders to be moved to Pietermaritzburg, on the 13th of February, where it will remain for the present.

*Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.): May I ask who paid for this movement, Natal or this country?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I believe the Natal Government are anxious to defray the cost of the actual movement, but I may add that has no relation to the actual war power involved.

*Mr. BELLOC: With the presence of such a battalion, have we not a perfect right to interfere with what Natal does involving expenditure upon it?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I cannot undertake to reply on a grave constitutional matter to a supplementary Question.

Mr. HAROLD COX asked whether the offence was committed before or after the proclamation of martial law.

*Mr. SPEAKER ruled that this Question did not arise out of the Answer given.

Natal Government.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what provision is made in the constitution of Natal for carrying on the government in the event of its being found impossible to form a Ministry.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Such a contingency is not contemplated in the Constitution of Natal any more than in the Constitution of the United Kingdom.

Execution of Natives.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he sanctioned the recent execution, under martial law, of Natal natives convicted of murder.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir.

Tabah.

*Mr. BELLOC: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Woodstock Division of Oxfordshire, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the sympathy so often expressed by Members of the present Government for the principle of arbitration in international disputes, he will offer to submit to arbitration the question whether or not Tabah is an integral portion of Egyptian territory.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury), for Sir Edward Grey: We have no reason to suppose that the question at issue with regard to Tabah and the adjoining frontier will not be settled by negotiation in the ordinary way, which is the most convenient method of reaching an agreement, and I hope it will not be necessary to adopt any other.

Falmouth and Stamping-Centres.

Mr. BARKER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is aware that the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce unanimously passed a Resolution in favour of having a stamping-centre in all county boroughs; and, in view of the fact that the harbour is much used as a port of call, whether he will grant facilities for the stamping of documents, particularly as the nearest offices are at Bristol and Portsmouth.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): The average number of executed documents sent to Somerset House by the postmaster at Falmouth for stamping during a month is thirty, and the total amount of duty so paid during the six months ended June 30th, 1905, was £35 6s. 6d. The amount of duty collected does not warrant the expenditure involved in setting up machinery and maintaining a staff of officials at Falmouth. If such a course were adopted throughout the country, the collection of stamp revenue would result in a considerable loss to the State, in many places.

Case of Paul Schmidt.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whethert he Dublin stipendiary has called his attention to a case which came before him on the 26th ultimo, where a man named Paul Schmidt was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for assaulting a woman; whether the stipendiary has recommended the expulsion of Schmidt from the United Kingdom; and what action, if any, does he propose taking in the matter.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): Yes, Sir: the magistrate has recommended the expulsion of this alien prisoner at the end of his sentence, and the case will receive consideration. There is no action for me to take at present.

Dock Regulations.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the inspectors have been appointed to carry out the regulations, dated 24th October, 1904, made by the Secretary of State, in respect of the processes of loading, unloading, moving and handling goods, in, on, or at any docks, wharf, or quay, and the processes of loading, unloading, or coaling any ship in any dock, harbour, or canal; and if inspections are periodically made to see that the regulations are carried out.

MR. GLADSTONE: Special inspectors have not been appointed to enforce the dock regulations. The factory inspectors attached to each district are charged with the duty of inspection of docks and quays, as of all other places that come under the Factory Act within their district, and visit them regularly. I recognise, however, as I have already stated in the House, that the regulations have added very considerably to the work of the staff in certain districts, and I am proposing to make certain additions to the staff with a view particularly to strengthening the inspection at docks.

"Time Cribbing."

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of time cribbing tried at the Darwen petty sessions on 22nd March; and whether, considering the difficulty the inspectors have in putting down this practice, he will give instructions to his inspectors to press for heavy penalties in all cases which are proved to the satisfaction of the court.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have seen the newspaper report of the case which the hon. Member has been good enough to send me. The inspector has already been instructed to ask for substantial penalties in time cribbing cases, and in particular to lay information in respect of not one but several of the employees in each instance. I observe from the Report that the inspector did both in the present case. The amount of the penalty is, however, a matter entirely in the discretion of the court.

Mr. Templeman, J.P.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the remarks of Mr. Kennedy, the police magistrate at Marlborough Street, in fining Mr. Frederick Templeman, J.P., West Ham, the sum of £5 with costs, for cruel treatment of a horse, alleged to be unfit for work, that he supposed Mr. Templeman, as a magistrate, convicts persons that come before him for cruelty, and that he had seldom seen such a poor miserable starved horse, which had to be brought on a float or taken away on a float; and whether the matter will be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, with a view to the removal of this gentleman from the Commission of the Peace.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I had not heard of the matter, but I have now brought the hon. Member's Question to the notice of the Lord Chancellor.

The Royal Canal.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade having regard to the requirements of Section 36 of the Act 8 and 9 Vic., c. 119, and the fact that General Hutchinson and Major Marindin, inspectors of the Board of Trade, have reported the Midland Great Western Railway Company as having failed to discharge its duty of maintaining, upholding, and preserving the Royal Canal for the purpose of navigation, and specified certain works as essential to the maintenance of the canal and to the discharge of the company's statutory obligations, and that the non-execution of these works is a serious loss to many, and having regard to Sections 3 and 4 of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1871, and Sections 40 and 41 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, whether the Board of Trade, having caused the inspections to be made and the defects consequent upon neglect to be ascertained, will now require the Midland Great Western Railway Company forthwith to execute the works of restoration and maintenance essential to put the Royal Canal in proper navigable order, in accordance with the statute, the bye-laws made thereunder, and the Reports of the inspectors.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The Board of Trade have no authority either under the statutory provisions specified or any other to take the action suggested.

Sir Francis Hopwood.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Board Trade how long Sir Francis Hopwood is expected to be absent from this country; who is to take charge of the departmental work during his absence; and upon which official will devolve the conduct of negotiations with such foreign countries as have recently increased their tariffs against this country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am unable to say how long Sir Francis Hopwood will be absent from this country. I have appointed Mr. Llewellyn Smith to discharge the duties of permanent secretary to the Board of Trade during his absence. The conduct of negotiations with foreign countries does not devolve on any particular official of the Board of Trade but is a matter for the Foreign Office, whose practice is to consult the Board of Trade on commercial matters.

LORD TURNOUR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if a special allowance can be made to the Secretary of the Board of Trade, in view of the heavy expenses in which he will be involved by his services in South Africa; and if some special allowance may be granted to the civil servant who replaces him during the next few months.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): No representation on the subject has reached the Treasury from the Board of Trade, with which Department the matter rests. Sir Francis Hopwood, on seeing this Question on the Paper, addressed to me a letter in which he says—"I am much obliged to the noble Lord for his kindly consideration on my behalf. I am glad to obey the directions of the Government without stipulating for any such unusual arrangement, and my colleague who will be good enough to act for me in my absence is also fully prepared to give his services on the same terms."

LORD TURNOUR: Will the Treasury be prepared to grant an additional sum if the Board of Trade ask for it?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Is the noble Lord not rather upsetting a precedent which his Party were accustomed to follow?

LORD BALCARRES: Will the hon. Gentleman lay a copy of the letter on the Table, seeing that he has quoted from it?

MR. MCKENNA: I will read the whole of it.

Vaccination Officers.

MR. BARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is prepared to consider the advisability of transferring the control of the vaccination officers from the Poor Law Guardians to the local borough council.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The proposal in the Question would seem to involve a transfer of vaccination duties generally from Boards of Guardians to Sanitary Authorities. The suggestion that such a transfer should be made was considered by the Royal Commission on Vaccination, who reported that it raised very great difficulties, chiefly owing to the number of the Sanitary Authorities as compared with that of the Boards of Guardians and the difference in the areas for which they respectively act. Upon the whole the Commissioners came to the conclusion that it would be impracticable to vest the sanitary and vaccination duties in all cases in a single local authority without a complete recasting of our present areas of local adminstration. I am afraid I could not give any promise at present to give effect to the proposal of my hon. friend.

Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

MR. BARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a conference of metropolitan guardians was held at Greenwich in March last year, with a view to urging upon the Department the necessity of holding an inquiry into the working of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and the creation of a central fund for the payment of superannuation moneys to all Poor Law officers; if he is aware that at the conference it was decided to ask the late

President to receive a deputation, and that the deputation was not received; and what action he is prepared to take in order to give effect to the wishes of the guardians attending the conference in question.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware of the resolutions passed at the conference at Greenwich, with regard to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. This subject, however, comes within the reference to the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress which is now sitting, and it does not seem to me necessary to direct a separate inquiry with regard to it at the present time.

Post Office Savings Bank — Paupers' Deposits.

*MR. BRUNNER (Lancashire, Leigh): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether if it comes to the knowledge of the Post Office authorities that a depositor in the Post Office is a pauper chargeable to the Poor Law guardians, he will give instructions that the Poor Law guardians shall be notified before the deposit is paid away under No. 28 (3) of the Post Office Savings Banks Regulations, 1905, or otherwise.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets. Poplar): When it is brought to the knowledge of the Post Office that a depositor has died in a workhouse or County Lunatic Asylum, information is given to the guardians before the deposits are paid to any claimant; and in the case of pauper lunatics it is open to the guardians to apply for a Justice's Order under Section 299 of the Lunacy Act 1890. As regards the Question of giving information regarding accounts of living persons to Boards of Guardians, the obligation imposed by Section 4 of the Savings Bank Act of 1861, indicates the importance attached by Parliament to the preservation of secrecy in regard to all deposits. But I am prepared to consider the Question.

Douglas Post Office Staff Holidays.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to a new scheme for holidays at Douglas post office, in which the months of July and August are eliminated; and whether, in view of the departmental scheme of 1898 by which, in lieu of taking some time in winter, the clerks were allowed a choice of the eight months from March to October, he will take steps to remedy the same.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The leave of the staff at Douglas is according to the general rule taken between March and October, with the exception of two days or three days which are taken in the winter. At Douglas, as at some other offices, there is exceptional pressure of work during July and August; and it is not possible to allow any of the staff to be away during those two months. This period has therefore, had to be excluded from the scheme of leave for several years past.

Vaccination of Teachers

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can now inform the House what decision he has arrived at regarding the compulsory vaccination of teachers.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I am considering how the object desired by the hon. Member can be attained, but it involves certain financial questions under the Teachers Superannuation Act, 1898, which I have not yet had time fully to investigate. I am not yet, therefore, in a position to make any announcement on the subject.

Diseases of Animals Act—Inspectors.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state the number of lay inspectors employed under the Diseases of Animals Act (Animals Division); how many of these inspectors are ex-military, ex-naval, ex-militia officers, or ex-land agents; what other previous occupations were these inspectors engaged in; how many are on the permanent establishment of the Board and what are their salaries; how many temporary veterinary inspectors are employed under the Diseases of Animals Act (Animals Division): can he say whether these professional men devote their whole time to the duties of the Board of Agriculture and what are the salaries received; whether the Board of Agriculture proposes to create a staff of permanent veterinary inspectors of the Animals Division from among the temporary veterinary inspectors or continue to go outside for their permanent officials.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Forty-four lay inspectors are at present employed in the Animals Division of the Board. Three of them are subject to a deduction of 10 per cent. from their salaries owing to previous service in the Army or Navy, and eleven of them are on the permanent establishment of the Board. The salaries of the permanent inspectors are as follows:—Two superintending inspectors (£500 × 20 × £700), four general inspectors (£300 × 15 × £400 with an additional allowance of £100) and five inspectors (£300 × 15 × £400). All these inspectors have had several years experience of the duties upon which they are engaged, and they are required to pass a qualifying examination. The veterinary inspectorate has recently been re-organised and will consist in future of one superintending inspector, (£500 × 20 × £700), four veterinary inspectors (£300 × 15 × £400 with an allowance of £100) and six veterinary inspectors (£300 × 15 × £400). All these officers will be on the permanent establishment of the Board. In addition there will be twelve assistant veterinary inspectors (£200 × 10 × £300) who will not be established, but who will devote their whole time to their duties under the Board. In the ordinary course vacancies among the permanent inspectors will be filled from the ranks of the assistant inspectors.

MR. KILBRIDE: Can I have a copy of that Answer, I have not heard a word.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I shall be happy to send the hon. Member a copy. May I suggest that it would be better with a complicated subject such as this to put the Question down as unstarred.

New Government Offices.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works what is the estimated saving by his decision to abandon the towers for the new Government Offices in Whitehall; if the necessary sum has already been provided by Act; and to what objects the money will now be allocated.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): No reliable Answer can be given to the Question till the variations have been properly dealt with by the surveyors and agreement arrived at on the many points requiring adjustment. No special sum is allocated to the towers by the Act, which provides for a number of public buildings. Any sum saved on the towers will be set off against any extras incurred in the works generally.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: Are there 3,000 feet of carved stone now on the works and have 110 masons been discharged?

*MR. HARCOURT: I think the hon. Member is not quite accurate in the figures.

Ordnance Survey.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, owing to the fact that the Ordnance Survey is now a permanent department of the Civil Service, the Treasury are taking, or intend to take, any steps to restore to the so-called temporary civil assistants of the Ordnance Survey Department the privileges of the Superannuation Act, suspended in 1870.

Notice had been given also of the following Question:—

MR. KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will say if the objections to recognising the Ordnance Survey as a permanent and pensionable department still exist; whether this department is a permanent department; and will he consider, with a view to introducing legislation, if necessary, the fairness of applying the Superannuation Act to all branches of the service.

MR. MCKENNA: If the hon. Member for West Cavan, who has addressed his Question to the First Lord of the Treasury, will allow me I will reply to both together. I have already stated that the position of the civil assistants in the Ordnance Survey is under consideration.

South African Commission.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will say what remuneration will be paid to the members of the new South African Commission.

MR. McKENNA: This question is now under discussion.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: When may I expect an Answer?

MR. McKENNA: As soon as the discussion is over.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Will the House have an opportunity of discussing the Vote?

MR. McKENNA asked for notice.

Motor Car Services for Ross-shire Fishing Industries.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the opinion expressed in the Report of the Mansfield Commission, in regard to the advantages to be derived by the establishment of motor car services for the conveyance of fish and general merchandise between remote fishing villages in the crofting counties and certain points on the Highland Railway, will he state whether arrangements can be made to establish, or subsidise, a service of this character between Fearn railway station and the fishing villages of Portmahomack, Balintore, and Hilton, Ross-shire.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The present arrangements of this kind by the Congested Districts Board are experimental and it is not intended to add to them at present; but apart from that consideration, the parishes of Tarbat and Fearn, in which the three villages named are situated, are not congested districts, and the Congested Districts Board have therefore no power to expend money for the services proposed.

Fishermen's Dwellings at Stornoway.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state under what circumstances Colonel Gore Booth, the engineer to the Congested Districts Board, passed the houses built by the Board at Battery Park, Stornoway, as fishermen's dwellings, seeing that when the fishermen went into occupation the houses were found not to be watertight.

MR. SINCLAIR: The houses were found upon inspection to be in good order and according to specifications; they were, therefore, taken over, but the roofing has been found to be unequal to the severe storms of this winter; and the contractor, who was bound by the contract to upkeep the houses during the winter, is now doing his best to repair the damage thoroughly.

Crofters Acts Amendment Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the recent seizures of land by landless cottars, the general land hunger in the Highlands, and eviction of landless cottars in the island of Lewis, will he arrange for the promised Crofters Acts Amendment Bill to be introduced before Easter, so that an opportunity may be given for considering the Bill during the recess.

MR. SINCLAIR: I recognise the advantage of the course suggested, and I regret that it is not now open to the Government. I have to thank the hon. Member himself and other hon. Members for suggesting numerous Amendments, some of which open large questions: these deserve and are receiving careful consideration, which cannot now be concluded in time to allow the Bill to be introduced before Easter.

MR. WEIR: Will it be immediately after Easter?

MR. SINCLAIR: No time will be lost.

Scottish School Teachers.

MR. MENZIES (Lanarkshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, with regard to the draft regulations for the education of teachers issued by the Scotch Education Department, consideration is being given to the recommendations for alterations proposed by the Educational Institute of Scotland, the School Boards of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other important boards; and, if so, whether he will also take means to ascertain the probable effects of these new regulations upon the smaller parish and burgh school boards throughout Scotland as to the supply of teachers, their rates, and the necessity or urgency of any present alteration upon the present system.

MR. SINCLAIR: Full consideration is being given to all representations regarding the draft regulations, whether made by school boards or by other bodies interested in education. The circumstances of small boards and of rural districts generally were made matter of special consideration when the regulations were drafted.

MR. MENZIES: Will not the new regulations involve a considerable addition to the school rates?

MR. SINCLAIR: There are conflicting opinions on that subject.

Scottish Royal Burghs.

MR. J. A. BRYCE (Inverness Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has yet received the opinion of the Lyon King at Arms on the question of the proclamation of the accession of sovereigns within burghs royal in Scotland; and, if not, whether he has any information as to the date when he is likely to receive it.

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir, I have not; and I regret to say that I have no further information to give at present.

Cork Land Transfer Registrar.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is now in a position to supply Members of this House with the terms of the appointment of Mr. Wright as registrar, under the Land Transfer Act, for the county and city of Cork, and with the correspondence that has passed on the subject, in order that Members may be able more easily to understand the merits of the Land Transfer (Ireland) Bill.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool Exchange): I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to the similar Question of the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University on Wednesday last.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to quote from this correspondence?

MR. HERRY: I intend to refer to it.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Then will you lay it on the Table?

MR. CHERRY: I do not think it desirable that the records of the House should be encumbered with correspondence of a private nature, but I am willing to show the correspondence to any one who wishes.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: But according to the rules of the House if correspondence is quoted from it must be laid?

MR. SLOAN: And it is very important we should see it.

MR. CHERRY: I will show it to any hon. Member who desires.

MR. LONSDALE: Then you refuse to comply with the rules of the House!

SIR EDWARD CARSON: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the late Mr. Standish O'Grady, as Clerk to the Crown and Peace of the East Riding of the county of Cork, was also appointed Registar of Titles for the county of Cork; how long he held the said office; and whether any acts done by him in virtue of such appointment require validation by Parliament.

MR. CHERRY: An order was made on December 10th, 1891, by the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, directing that until further order the local office for registration of title for the county of Cork should be under the management and control of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the East Riding of the County. The late Mr. Standish O'Grady was at that time Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the city of Cork and East Riding of the county of Cork, and continued to discharge the duties of the local registrar of title for the entire county of Cork until his death in 1905. I do not desire to express an opinion at present as to whether this arrangement was or was not legal under the provisions of the Local Registration of Title Act, or as to whether acts done by Mr. O'Grady require validation by Parliament; but I hope to be in a position to make a full statement upon the subject upon the Second Reading of the Bill now before the House.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Was Mr. O'Grady's appointment ever questioned during the fourteen years he held office?

MR. CHERRY asked for notice.

Irish Land—Future Tenants.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he proposes to take any action regarding future tenants who, not having been allowed to enter the Land Courts, are paying higher rents than judicial tenants pay, and are now required to sign agreements to buy their holdings at the same number of years' purchase as those judicial tenants pay, and who, when they ask to have the prices fixed by arbitration, by the Estates Commissioners or by any other competent and impartial authority, may be informed by the landlord that he will not tolerate any outside interference with his business.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): I would remind the hon. Member that sales to future tenants do not come within the zones under the Act of 1903, and that, therefore, the property to be sold in such cases is subject to inspection. The Estates Commissioners inform me that when an estate is being sold and certain holdings are proposed to be excluded from the sale because the tenants have not agreed to the landlord's terms, it is the practice of the Commissioners to inquire into the matter, and if they consider that the offer made by the landlord was unreasonable, they may refuse to declare the lands, exclusive of such holdings, as fit to be regarded as an estate. As to legislation, I have already repeatedly said that I can make no statement at present.

Maintenance of Pauper Lunatics.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received a Resolution, originally passed by the Ballinasloe Asylum Committee and subsequently adopted by the Mullingar Asylum Committee, asking for relief of local taxation from the present heavy charge for upkeep of pauper lunatic asylums in Ireland; and if he will state what action the Government proposes to take with reference thereto, and when.

*MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the replies which I gave to similar Questions on Monday and Wednesday last.

Irish Emigration.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the encouragement given by the Imperial Parliament to emigration from Ireland, the restrictions upon the emigration of the feeble of mind and body amounting to a practical prohibition, and the consequently abnormal proportion the dependent bear to the efficient Members of the Irish population as compared with any other known country, His Majesty's Government will take any practical steps to check the emigration of young and healthy people by giving them land to live upon or otherwise; and, in the meantime, will larger provision be made for the maintenance of dependent persons of all classes out of the Irish moneys now devoted to Imperial purposes.

*MR. BRYCE: The hon. Member is, I think, mistaken in supposing that Parliament has encouraged emigration from Ireland; but it is, of course, the fact that the United States have placed rectrictions on the immigration of persons whose feebleness of mind or body is likely to make them a public charge. Steps are already being taken by means of the Land Purchase Acts to give the Irish people land to live upon, but it must be some time before the full effect is attained. The question of the care and control of the feeble-minded is at present under the consideration of a Royal Commission who have received evidence from Ireland.

Horse Racing in Ireland.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutentant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a statement made in the course of a lecture by an instructor under the Board of Agriculture. to the effect that if horse-racing and hunting were banished out of Ireland it would be a good, prosperous country;

and whether he will consider the advisability of not retaining this lecturer's services.

*MR. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture are informed that the statement alluded to is not quite accurately reported in the Question. The statement actually made was that horse-racing and hunting were among the probable causes of the use of the good land in Ireland for pasturage instead of tillage.

MR. KILBRIDE: Of what nationality is the lecturer? Is he a Scotsman?

*MR. BRYCE: If he made these philosophical remarks, I should say he probably is.

Loans to Irish Tenants.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in the event of a tenant, who has signed an agreement to purchase his holding, making an application for a loan to the Office of Public Works in Ireland, the Commissioners of Public Works, in any case in which the making of the loan is dependent on the sanction of the advance for purchase by the Estates Commissioners, will accept the provisional declaration of the Estates Commissioners deeming the holding to form part of an estate when the holding is under a judicial tenancy and the purchase price is within the zones, as sufficient evidence to enable them to make the advance, provided interest on the purchase money is paid to the last collection day.

MR. MCKENNA: I understand the point of the hon. Member's Question to be whether a loan can be made to a purchasing tenant as to an owner, although at the time he is only a prospective owner by reason of the holding not yet having been vested in him. I am advised that the Answer is in the negative, and that such a declaration by the Estates Commissioners would not enable the advance to be made.

MR. O'SHEE: Will the hon. Gentleman take steps to provide the necessary facilities?

MR. MCKENNA: I am told it can only be done by an amending Bill.

Ministers as Company Directors.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury upon what principle a Member of the Government is precluded from occupying the position of a director of a public company, but is allowed to act as managing partner in a large private business.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): It has been found in practice that it is inconvenient for Members of the Government to hold directorships unless in exceptional circumstances, and no inconvenience has arisen from Members of the Government being also concerned in the management of private businesses in which they are interested.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is not the object to secure the Government Bench from the danger of becoming a sty for guinea pigs?

The South African Committee.

LORD TURNOUR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how many recent precedents there are for the permanent head of a public Department being sent on a long mission abroad; and if he will take care, in future, to prevent public Departments from losing the services of their departmental chiefs.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Answer to the first part of the Question is that precedents exist for the permanent head of a public Department being sent on a long mission abroad; the Answer to the second part of the Question is that care will doubtless be taken in the case of any future missions, as in the present instance, to select for service those who happen to be specially qualified for the work.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are his special qualifications?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: They are evident in a broad way to every one, and especially so to those who are acquainted with the individual appointments.

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill.

MR TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can, in view of the majority for the Second Reading of the Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill, give the necessary facilities for sending it to the Standing Committee on Law.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am quite aware of the strong feeling, which the Government fully shares, in favour of this Bill, and also of the special claim founded on the overwhelming expression of opinion on the Second Reading. But I cannot make any promise in answer to the request of my hon. friend that we shall give facilities until the Government are assured of the progress of the Bills for which they are themselves responsible.

Trade Disputes Bill.

LORD BALCARRES: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Second Reading of the Trade Disputes Bill will be taken.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Second Reading of the Trade Disputes Bill will not be taken till after Easter.

The Natal Crisis.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private notice. On what date did his Majesty's Government become aware that martial law was proclaimed in Natal; had they any reason for thinking that crimes involving capital punishment would not be committed, and would not be dealt with by that tribunal; on what date did they become aware that two natives had been executed under sentence of court-martial; had Sir H. McCallum any instructions from this Government other than those general instructions to Governors defined under the Constitution?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As these are details best within the knowledge of the Colonial Office my hon. friend the Under-Secretary will reply.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Very scanty notice has been given to enable the details of the Question to be dealt with in the department. So far as I can answer it, I should say that the Governor of Natal telegraphed on February 9th that martial law had been proclaimed on that date. It was proclaimed on account of the murder of two members of the Natal Police Force on February 8th. The execution of the two natives took place on February 14th, and official information to this effect reached the Secretary of State on February 24th. The Answer to the final Question is in the negative.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER: I do not think my hon. friend has answered the second Question—whether the Government had any reason for thinking that crimes involving capital punishment would not be committed and dealt with by martial law.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I should have thought the hon. Gentleman was quite competent to answer that Question. I may add, on behalf of the Government, that no information which the Colonial Office could supply would assist the hon. Gentleman in forming a judgment on a matter obviously within the domain of common-sense.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): Will the hon. Gentleman tell us whether the twelve natives have been shot?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I have every reason to believe that the executions were to have been carried out at noon to-day by the Natal Government.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary a series of Questions of which I have given him private notice; whether he has any information to give the House regarding events which have transpired in Natal since Thursday last in connection with the execution of natives condemned to death by martial law; whether he can inform the House if the martial law proclaimed in February in Natal was made retrospective so as to cover acts committed prior to its proclamation; what are the rank and military *status* of the members of the court-martial which tried the condemned natives; whether the court-martial held its sittings in private; what arrangements were made for the defence of the accused; whether he can undertake to procure the evidence taken at the trial and lay it on the Table of the House; and whether any prisoners are still to be tried, or, if captured, may be tried, by this court-martial.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The notice which the hon. Gentleman was kind enough to send me this morning differs somewhat from the series of Questions he has now put to me. He has now put a great many Questions which were not in his letter, but some are contained in his letter, and these alone I am able to answer. In regard to the first Question, subsequent to the information given by Lord Elgin in another place on Friday, he has learned from the Governor of Natal, in a telegram dated 31st March, that the Colonial Government have withdrawn their resignation, and have advised him that the sentence of death passed by court-martial on twelve natives should be carried out. The Governor stated the men would be executed to-day. In regard to the second Question, as to the rank of the officers of the court-martial, I think I have already answered that in reply to the hon. Member for the Ayr Burghs. With reference to the third Question, whether the court-martial held its sittings in private, the Secretary of State has not been specially informed as to whether they were held in public or in private. As to the fourth Question, inquiring what arrangements were made for the proper defence of the accused, I have to say that they were represented by counsel, and were allowed to call witnesses, and the Colonial Attorney-General gave it as his opinion that they had had a fair trial. With regard to the fifth Question, Lord Elgin will communicate with the Governor as to the publication of the evidence. In regard to the sixth Question, whether any prisoners are still to be tried, or, if captured, may be tried, by this court-martial, my reply is that martial law is still in force in the Colony, and that proceedings under it are still liable to be taken.

Mr. MYER (Lambeth, N: I should like to ask whether any representations have been received from any of our Colonies expressing horror and protesting against these blood-thirsty murders.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): Upon a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is it in order for any hon. Member of this House to describe judicial proceedings as murder?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must not make a speech. I understood he rose to a point of order.

*Mr. REES: So I did. I used an expression to which objection was apparently taken, and I may have been mistaken. I meant to ask whether an hon. Member of this House is in order in describing proceedings, whether judicial or other, of his fellow countrymen in Africa as blood-thirsty murders.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I wish to ask whether judicial proceedings can be justly described as murder in this House. I think it would be well to have your ruling on that.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that the expression calls for my interference.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is martial law judicial proceedings?

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, Member for Leicester, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the way in which martial law in Natal is being applied and the imminent and grave dangers to the native subjects of the Crown involved in its administration," and the pleasure of the House being signified:

The Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until the Evening Sitting, this day.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS BILL.

"To enable local authorities to adopt the provisions of The Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act, 1896, and to give officers of such authorities a right of appeal," presented by Mr. Luke White; supported by Mr. Barnard, Captain Balfour, Sir Joseph F. Leese, Dr. Napier, and Mr. Henry Forster; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 141.]

VAGRANT CHILDREN BILL.

"To provide for the better protection of children of vagrant parents," presented by Mr. Spicer; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Toulmin, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Lewis Haslam, Mr. Vivian, and Mr. Maclean; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL.

"To provide secular education, periodical medical examination of, and food for children attending State-supported schools," presented by Mr. Thorne; supported by Mr. Barnes, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Parker; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th May, and to be printed. [Bill 143.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill; Mr. Herbert Samuel, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Ure.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill; Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Billson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the consideration of the existing Standing Orders with proposed Amendments, if under discussion at twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman*).

The House divided:—Ayes, 320; Noes, 87. (Division List No. 38.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grins'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James

Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans'a
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horation
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncas'r
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell, (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thorne, William
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway

Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M‘Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Huddersfd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staffs.)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
M‘Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE) (SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE).

Standing Order No. 1 [28th February, 1888, and 2nd May, 1902], read as followeth:—Sittings of the House.

(1) Unless the House otherwise order, the House shall meet every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at two of the clock for an afternoon sitting, and at nine of the clock for an Evening Sitting.

(2) At one of the clock at the Evening Sitting, Mr. SPEAKER shall adjourn the House without Question put, unless a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means, or unless proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, or otherwise exempted as hereinafter provided from the operation of this Standing Order be then under consideration.

(3) At half-past seven of the clock and at midnight on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday, except as aforesaid, and at half-past five of the clock on Fridays, the proceedings on any business then under consideration shall be interrupted; and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the chair and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the debate, or in Committee that the Chairman do report progress, or do leave the chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put.

(4) Provided always, that on the interruption of business the closure may be moved; and if moved, or if proceedings under the closure rule be then in progress, the SPEAKER or Chairman shall not leave the Chair, until the Questions consequent thereon, and on any further Motion, as provided in the Rule "closure of debate," have been decided.

(5) After the business under consideration at twelve and half-past five respectively has been disposed of, no opposed

business shall be taken; and after the business under consideration at half-past seven of the clock has been disposed of no other business shall be taken.

(6) All business appointed for any sitting, and not disposed of before the termination of the sitting, shall stand over until the next sitting, or until such other sitting on any day on which the House ordinarily sits as the Member in charge of the business may appoint.

(7) A Motion may be made by a Minister of the Crown at the commencement of public business, to be decided without Amendment or debate, to the following effect: "That the proceedings on any specified business, if under discussion at twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House,'" or to the following effect. That the proceedings on any specified business, if under discussion on the interruption of business at this afternoon's sitting, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of business at this Evening's Sitting.

(8) Provided always, that after any business exempted from the operation of this Order is disposed of, the remaining business of the sitting shall be dealt with according to the provisions applicable to business taken after twelve o'clock.

(9) Provided also, that the Chairman of Ways and Means do take the chair as Deputy-Speaker, when requested so to do by Mr. SPEAKER, without any formal communication to the House; and that Mr. SPEAKER shall nominate, at the commencement of every session, a panel of not more than five Members to act as temporary Chairman of Committees, when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

THE PRIME MINISTER (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The first Amendment which stands in my name runs as follows—

> Paragraph (1), line (2), leave out the word 'Wednesday and' after 'Thursday' to insert the words 'and Friday."

That is to say, it proposes to shift the short sitting from Friday back to Wednesday. It may be asked why I move this Amendment if we intend to leave this matter purely to the decision of the House. The reason is that no private Member can move an Amendment to the Standing Orders of the House, it must be done by a Minister. Therefore it is in my Ministeral capacity that I move this Amendment. I do not, however, wish to exercise any authority such as the Leader of the House sometimes exercises. The reason why I can take this attitude quite consistently is that this change makes no direct difference to the business of the House, though, as I shall show, it makes a great indirect difference. Speaking for myself as a Member of the House, and in my individual capacity, and not acting in my Ministerial capacity, I may say that personally I have a very strong opinion indeed upon this subject. I was opposed to the change from Wednesday to Friday when it was introduced, and everything I have observed since has fortified me in that opinion. Now, what are the advantages claimed for the short sitting on the Friday? First of all, it is said it is most convenient for those living at a distance from London. We can all see that. It must be more convenient to those whose homes are at a distance from London and who have business or occupations which necessitate or are benefited by their presence at home as frequently as possible. The present arrangement gives those hon. Members all Saturday and the early part of Monday and probably a little slice of Friday, to devote to their business. I am afraid that they sometimes cut a little deeper and take a little bit of Thursday. Any one can see the advantage in that direction, but what I say is that that is not the point of view from which we have to look at rules such as these. It is not the convenience of any individual Member, or any section of the House, that should influence us, and it cannot be claimed that that consideration should be supreme, although I honour and respect the motives put forward in favour of that argument. But there is another class, perhaps even more influential—I refer to those who wish to leave early on Friday, not for business, but for amusement, for society, and for relaxation. I do not object to these objects, because they are quite legitimate; but I do not think that those are considerations which a Government ought to entertain. We ought to consider what is best for the advancement of the business of the House, and for the maintenance of a proper spirit in the House, and I do not see in either of the arguments I have stated—which, so far as I know, are the only reasons which have been adduced —anything to prevent the House from reverting to the old system. I now turn to Wednesday, and I quote in support of Wednesday the obvious disadvantages of Friday. I have stated the alleged advantages—let us now consider the disadvantages. The present rule involves four days of uniform, unbroken service each day, with the same hours, the same stress of business, with no relief either to hon. Members or to the officials of the House. It is in many cases bad for them not to have this break, and bad for the transaction of careful business. I will take the case of a great Bill in Committee. Supposing there is a great Bill in Committee and progress is made on Monday and Tuesday and Amendments are made in the clauses which must inevitably affect the future clauses of the Bill. The future clauses have to be altered and adjusted to suit those Amendments. The draftsman, the Minister in charge, the Clerks at the Table, and the Members of the House interested in the Bill would all be better for an interval to realise what the nature of the changes really are, and how far the operation of the Bill may be affected by the changes. It is difficult if you consider such a Bill in Committee on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, to keep pace with the changes made, and too often, I am afraid, matters get into a little bit of a tangle, and damage is done in this way. Therefore it is not in the interests of good workmanship not to have a break, and there is a positive advantage to legislation by having a short day on Wednesday. I submit that as a strong argument to influence the decision of hon. Members in this matter. But, after all, is a four days holiday desirable? Many hon. Members cease work on Thursday, and their labours do not become operative again until the evening of Monday. That may be an agreeable state of things to the hon. Member who has interests elsewhere, but is it conducive to serious work? We come here for work and not for an agreeable pastime, and I think we ought not to regard it as a sound normal arrangement that this great interruption of business should occur each week. For my part, I am convinced that in the interests of serious work and the efficiency of the House this week-end worship is not advisable and has worked serious damage; and this, after all, should be our governing consideration. I am only giving my own opinion, humbly and modestly, to the House. It is, however, the opinion of a very old Member of long experience, who has watched the proceedings of the House, and I believe it is an opinion shared by a great majority of those who in previous Parliaments have seen the working of such changes. I do not wish to say anything unpleasant of the origin of this new Friday system, but I believe it arose in consequence of the difficulty in the last Parliament on the part of the Government in keeping a House. ["No, no."] The last Government found it almost impossible to avoid being placed in a minority on a Friday, and that was the weight which in addition to the other considerations which I have mentioned turned the scale. Judging by what I have seen in the new Parliament, there will now be no difficulty in keeping a House even on a Friday, and I trust that there is enough of the spirit of work in the House to enable that to be done. Therefore, I think we can, with confidence, go back to the old arrangement. I place these views of my own with submission before the House, but in my capacity as a Minister and Leader of the House all I do is to move this Amendment in order that the House may be allowed to pass judgment upon it. I treat this Question as a separate matter by itself; the question of the hours will come after. That is another consideration altogether, and it has been agreed that a general discussion upon the whole scheme of hours shall take place on the first Amendment dealing with the hours. We will take it on the next Amendment and treat this Amendment in a category by itself to be dealt with in a different way.

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph 1, line 2, to leave out the words 'Wednesday and.'"—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had allowed this to be an open question. This was, after all, largely, if not purely, a domestic question, and one which the House should decide without any direction from the Government Benches. Of course he knew that a Minister was bound to move Amendments to the Standing Orders, but those who differed from the views of the right hon. Gentleman could not help feeling that the moving of this Amendment by the Prime Minister naturally prejudiced their chances of defeating it, because of his great weight in the House, and it would have been fairer if it could have been moved by a private Member. The right hon. Gentleman had sketched to the House some of the reasons which were in the minds of the members of the late Government when this rule was passed. He joined issue with the right hon. Gentleman on one or two of those points. He had told them that in carrying this rule the late Government had paid too much regard to the rich Members of the House and their desire to spend happy and pleasurable week-ends in the country. As one who was largely consulted in regard to this rule, he might say that that certainly was not the reason which led the late Prime Minister to introduce it. There was at that time a large number of the poorer Members of the House—amongst whom he placed himself—who wished to pass the week-ends in domesticity at home. One gentleman who unfortunately was no longer a Member of this House—Mr. Broadhurst—strongly supported the Friday rule, and did so on account of the convenience it would be to Labour Members, and he pressed that view very strongly upon the House, arguing that it would be an enormous convenience to the poor Members of the House, who had not palaces at their disposal close at hand, and who found London an expensive place to live in. He mentioned that fact to show that there were other reasons suggested at that time why the change should be made. They were told that if Friday were substituted for the Wednesday, it would be impossible to keep the House together on the former day. Experience, however, had not borne that out. The division lists showed that as large a number of Members attended the debates on important Bills of private Members on Fridays as ever was the case on Wednesdays. Although in his experience it was never difficult to keep a House on Friday, it was certainly difficult, and would still be difficult, to keep the House late on a Friday night. When the present rules were introduced, the desires of business men were also kept in view. The House must remember that all business men did not live in London, and that it would be difficult for some perhaps to remain Members of the House if the half-day were on Wednesday instead of Friday. He well remembered that Sir William Arrol, a distinguished business man, who was no longer a Member of this House, would not have remained so long a Member, had he not got away on Fridays, and there were others in the same position. The right hon. Gentleman had talked about the strain on the officials of the House, but he had not observed that the strain was greater than when the break was on the Wednesday, and of those whom he had consulted on the point, the vast majority certainly preferred that the half-day should remain as at present. Another argument put forward was that it would clash with social and political engagements, but he thought there was very little in the argument, because social engagements naturally fitted themselves to the arrangements of the House, and as regarded political engagements, it was certainly as convenient to hold them on a Friday as on a Wednesday. The Friday was very convenient to hon. Members who had to attend political engagements some distance from London, as they had no occasion to hurry back. He admitted that the first consideration was the convenience of the House, and if he thought that an alteration of the half-day sitting from Friday to Wednesday would be for its convenience, he should not oppose the recommendation of the Prime Minister, but believing that Friday was a more convenient day for the half holiday than Wednesday, he certainly hoped the House would not agree with the Prime Minister. If the Friday were to be a full day he would at any rate suggest that the House should meet half an hour earlier and disperse half an hour earlier.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) heartily supported the Prime Minister's proposal. He quite agreed that the four continuous evening sittings were a tax upon Members and officials of the House. Under the previous arrangement it was an enormous advantage when an important Bill was in Committee to have the Wednesday as an interval in which to re-consider and re-adjust Amendments. He had always believed that the change from Wednesday to Friday was not really made for the purpose of enabling Members to get away, but to keep them here with important work on Fridays. In the old days, when Supply was the business on Friday, if the Votes were before the House upon which they had no knowledge, it was a very fair opportunity of getting a good pair. Since the Friday had become the short sitting he had hardly found an occasion on which to get away until the Saturday morning. There were many Members living away from London to whom the early rising on Friday was of no use at all. There was always an agricultural Bill or a temperance Bill on a Friday, and when the Government got hold of the day they were sure to put the most important business down, so that Members could not get away. He hoped the House would return to the old practice of having the half day in the middle of the week.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said that a division was taken upon this question by the Committee on Procedure, and by eight votes to five they decided in favour of retaining Friday. Points in the Prime Minister's argument which appealed to him were in reference to important Bills in Committee and the continuous services of the officials; but so far as he had been able to ascertain the opinion of the officials they preferred the retention of the Friday, and in regard to Bills in Committee there was an easy way out of the difficulty. It was not incumbent upon the Government that a Bill should be discussed continuously for four days. Another way that had been suggested, and which appealed to him with considerable force, was to have two morning sittings a week. There was no reason why the House should not meet at twelve o'clock on Wednesdays for Government business and adjourn at eight in the evening, giving a full Parliamentary day's time, and retaining the Friday as at present. He hoped the House would retain the half-day on Friday, even if it should involve the shortening of some other day in the week. The present arrangement was invaluable to hon. Members who had other duties besides those in the House, whereas the evening break on Wednesday did not count beside it. The freedom from five o'clock on Friday until two o'clock on Monday was a real inspiration to good work for the rest of the week.

Sir Brampton Gurdon.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that in this matter, so far as he could judge, he was in a minority, for he was strongly in favour of the short sitting on Wednesday. He did not speak in the name of his colleagues of the Irish Party, because he believed they were about evenly divided on the subject. He spoke only for himself as a working Member of the House, who for a good many years had made it a practice of being in the House throughout the sitting. From that point of view the half-day on Wednesday eased the strain of the week. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent put the case of the business man. Of course, the element in the House composed of business men was of enormous importance, but it was not the most important thing connected with the business of the House to have men whose whole mind and energies were engaged in business outside politics. He had always taken the view that the business of a Member of Parliament ought to be the work of Parliament, and that if a Member was to do effective work as a politician he must devote himself to politics. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of Sir William Arrol and asked if they desired to exclude men of that kind. Sir William Arrol certainly was a distinguished engineer, but as a Member of the House what did he do? He certainly did not give a constant attendance and he took no active part in political work; and to say that they were to alter the whole basis of their business to enable distinguished men who could not from the very nature of things take an active personal interest in the business was a foolish suggestion which was not conducive to the proper transaction of the business of the House. There was no one—least of all one who had sat as many years in Parliament and had experienced so much courtesy from the officials as he had—who would desire to increase the burden thrown upon them. With the exception of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, however, these alterations did not materially affect the officials, because they were able to replace one official with another, and so the question was narrowed down to one of the inconvenience and strain upon the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees. He had yet to learn that there had been any expression of opinion from the present or the late Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to the effect that going back to the old rule of Wednesday would increase the strain upon them. Social and political engagements had been spoken of, but the House ought to dismiss that argument altogether in deciding their business arrangements. That was a false ground to go upon, and if it could be shown that Wednesday would be a boon to the working Members of the House they ought to be very slow in refusing to accept this Amendment. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had spoken of two short days. He should favour such an arrangement if it did not deprive private Members of their right to bring forward Motions. He did believe that most work was to be got out of the House of Commons not by driving but by being considerate to hon. Members. He believed they now had a House of Commons which was determined to get to business, and he was convinced that the shortening of the hours would re-act upon the action of hon. Members and lead to a more practical discharge of their duties and a more rapid transaction of the business of the House. As a working Member of the House he took the view that Wednesday ought to be a short day, because a break in the middle of the week was a great relief to the strain of the work.

*MR. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) said there had been two proposals made, one from one Front Bench in favour of Wednesday as an early day, and another from the other Front Bench in favour of Friday. He was inclined to agree with both sets of argument, and suggested having a compromise between the two Front Benches, and, instead of one early day, having two early days —Wednesday and Friday. His difficulty, however, was whether to vote for the Wednesday, and he would ask the Prime Minister, who had already shown generosity, which they appreciated, in giving the freedom to vote, whether he would extend his generosity and promise that, if Wednesday was carried he would consider whether Friday should also be an early day. It need not be a short day, for if the House met at 12 and adjourned at 8, there would be about the same amount of time as if it sat at night, and he suggested that as a compromise. If he was obliged to choose between Wednesday and Friday, speaking for those who lived at a distance from London, he should choose Friday as being the more convenient. He thought a good many hon. Members would prefer that they should have earlier hours than at the present time, because they did not wish to emulate the owls and the foxes.

*SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said he was glad that the Prime Minister had introduced this Amendment. He had sat in this House for twenty-two years under the old rules, and four years under the new, and the new rules were a burden upon Members which they ought not to be called upon to bear. They were invented merely for social purposes, and to those hon. Members who were getting on in years they constituted an insuperable bar to their performing their duties properly. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench to talk about business men, but he ventured to think that business men were quite as anxious as anybody else to have a little holiday on Wednesday. If more consideration was shown to hon. Members the Government would be able to get more work out of them. Without the slightest fear or hesitation he declared that it was impossible for men who had attained a certain age to sit late for four consecutive nights in this House without breaking down. He hoped the proposal of the Prime Minister would be accepted, because he was sure that it would be for the benefit of the House generally. He did not see why the House should not meet at 12 and rise at 6.30 on Wednesday and Friday. Under the present rule, constantly on Friday at 4.30 the closure was moved, and the same thing could be done on Wednesday, and an equal amount of business would be got through without the health of hon. Members being deteriorated. As one of the oldest Members of the House, who had had a great deal of experience, and who was not merely an ornamental Member, but one who attended every day, he supported the Prime Minister's proposal.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) said that as the hon. Member who moved the Amendment in the last Parliament in favour of retaining Wednesday as the short day, he wished to say that his experience since had not made him doubt the wisdom of the course he then took. He thought that if the House had been left free to vote as they chose when the change was made the result would have been different. The House were unfortunate in having this question put into a water-tight compartment by itself in this debate, because on the former occasion when it was discussed the issue turned upon what was intended to be done with the Friday if the alteration was carried. He thought there ought to be some statement as to what was going to be done in regard to private Members' Motions, which now came on Wednesday evening, but which might be relegated to Friday evening. He agreed as to the advantage of having a break in the work in the middle of the week. As to the further suggestion of having two days with morning sittings only, he pointed out that such an arrangement would entirely upset the present arrangement for Committee work upstairs. It would no longer give two days for Grand Committees, and it would seriously interfere with all the work of Private Bill Committees. Unless some more carefully considered scheme was put forward than the present he should not recommend the House to listen to that proposition, because of the extreme inconvenience which would follow in its train. It seemed to him that the "week end" had gained many adherents among hon. Members, but some of them had not had the experience of others who had spoken in favour of the former arrangement in regard to Wednesday.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said that he was a business man, but he was not one of those who deprecated the mere politician. He valued the politician, and he recognised, as the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had said, that a Member of Parliament should be devoted entirely to politics, but he held that it was no loss to the House of Commons to have men who for two or three hours a week were associated with business. It was desirable to have in Parliament men who were associated with the trade unions, as well as men who, although they gave the greater part of their time to Parliamentary work, were associated with the practical affairs of life, not only in London, but in towns far away from the Metropolis. There were a large number of that class in the late Parliament, and he believed there were still more in this Parliament. It was only due to that class, who tried to attend and vote intelligently, that they should not be driven away from the House, or driven to the alternative of neglecting their duties on Friday evening. It was the case that some hon. Members could not take part in divisions if taken late on Friday and then catch trains to the eastern counties, and it was because they wished to attend to their Parliamentary duties, and also to have two or three hours on Saturday for consultation with the heads of departments in connection with their own business matters, that they would support the present arrangement. If it was the desire of a majority to have the short sitting on Wednesday, the House would have to abide by the decision, and they would have to leave the House on the first opportunity, or neglect the work of the House on Friday evening; and they did not want to do that. There were hon. Members who, as had been pointed out, were engaged in local government duties on Saturday morning, and it was highly desirable that they should be in touch with local people continually on questions of education and other matters which cropped up. While Parliament was sitting there should be opportunities for Members to consult their constituencies. He was grateful to the Prime Minister for leaving this an open question, and he hoped there would be a large majority in favour of retaining the short sitting on Friday. When it came to the question of Wednesday he would vote for shortening the sitting on that day also.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he was an old Member of the House, and he differed from the view expressed by two hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side who had claimed to represent the old Members. His experience was in exactly the opposite direction to that of his hon. friends. The change made by substituting Friday for Wednesday for the short sitting had been beneficent. He believed it had been good for the work of the House and for the work of individuals. By getting away early on Friday hon. Members came back on Monday more braced for their work than they did when they had a long day on Friday and frittered away Wednesday evening idly in London. The question raised the opposing interests of those who had their homes and main interest in London, and those who had their homes and main interest in other places. He could not see why the interest of those who resided in London should be made supreme, and the interests of others entirely forgotten when these arrangements were under consideration. He strongly recommended hon. Members not to return to the old Wednesday arrangement. They should stick to the Friday, and do all they possibly could to get the Wednesday as well.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) thought that every one who had had experience of the Wednesday for the half holiday must have found it much more convenient than Friday. So far as getting to the north was concerned there were excellent trains at midnight on Friday. He hoped a large majority would be in favour of the short sitting on Wednesday.

*Mr. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) said his hon. friend the Member for the Ashford Division had warned Members that they lacked sufficient information of their own to come to a proper decision on this matter, and had recommended Wednesday for the short day. He thought his own experience of the House was as long as that of his hon. friend, and he was not sure that his attendance in the House had not been even more constant. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had made an observation to the effect that Sir William Arrol devoted so much time to his business that he gave a poor attendance to the work of the House. During the five years, from 1900 to 1905, there were 2,106 divisions in the House, and of these the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was present at 1,319. The hon. and learned Member was able to devote the whole of his time to the business of the House.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I do not think these figures are correct.

*Mr. FORSTER: They have been furnished to me.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: This may be a matter of trivial importance, but it refers to a matter of fact. I do not know where the hon. Member got his figures, but I entirely dispute them. I should say that I took part in nearly double the number of divisions.

*Mr. FORSTER said that in that case the hon. and learned Member had been fortunate enough to attend more divisions than actually took place. The point he wished to make was that Sir William Arrol, so far from making a poor attendance, attended only fifteen divisions fewer, according to his information, than the hon. and learned Member. He wanted to say a word or two with reference to the question whether or not the substitution of Wednesday for the present Friday arrangement would improve the efficiency of the House of Commons. That was the question before the House. What was meant by the efficiency of the House of Commons? They did not mean only the passing of a large number of measures; but, speaking from a certain amount of experience, what they wanted in order to secure efficiency was that they should have a sufficient number of Members present for the adequate discussion of the subject of debate, that the composition of the House should be fairly represented by the number of Members present, and that after adequate discussion from all points of view they should come to a definite decision. He thought that the present arrangement of Parliamentary time made for efficiency more than the substitution of Wednesday for Friday as the short day would do. He remembered that when the present rules were under discussion fears were expressed very similar to those enunciated this afternoon by the Prime Minister to the effect that the result of making Friday the short day would be to lose the services of many hon. Members not only on the whole of the Friday, but also on part of the Thursday. But experience had proved that these fears had not been realized. In fact, the average attendance on Fridays under the new rules had been greater than under the old rules. Then it was said that under the present arrangement the strain of four long sittings was more than Members were able to endure, and that it was an undue strain on Ministers. He should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman spoke from, at any rate, no very long experience as to the effect upon Ministers. Reflecting the opinion of his right hon. and hon. friends who lately occupied the Treasury Bench, he could say that they found the strain of four long sittings was not out of proportion to the benefit of a clear holiday at the end of the week. He himself had been present at every sitting during the past four years and he had found no strain from having been constantly in the House on these four nights; and he might say that the work of a Government whip was not altogether a sinecure. The strain on him was not often removed even for a few moments, and from experience he could affirm that the clear holiday at the end of the week more than made up for the four days strain. Again, it was said that if the short sitting on Wednesday were regained, it would afford an opportunity to frame valuable Amendments by the Opposition to important Bills, and give time for a calm review of the work of the first part of the week and of preparation for the work that lay before the House for the remainder of the week. He had watched with a jealous eye during the last four years whether the new rules would have the effect of diminishing the number of Amendments, but he found that neither from lack of time for preparation, nor from any other cause whatever, had the number of Amendments to important Bills fallen off. It was said that the short day in the middle of the week gave an excellent opportunity for compromise when such was thought necessary; but he thought their experience of the last few days showed that even without the Wednesday half-holiday compromise was possible between Wednesday and Friday. He wanted to say a word on behalf of a class of individuals to whom reference had not yet been made. He was one of those who were fortunate enough to have a home close to London, and so far as he was concerned it was quite immaterial to him whether they rose early on Friday or Wednesday; but he wanted to say a word on behalf of those who, either from necessity or choice, had their homes in the country and who wanted to return to their homes to spend the week-end. He spoke on behalf of those who were fathers of families.

Mr. MADDISON (Burnley): How many of a family have you?

*Mr. FORSTER said that that was quite immaterial. There were numbers of Members who, like himself, had no house in London and who preferred to keep their families in the country because they believed it was better for young children; and these Members would suffer by the proposed change. If it could be shown that under present arrangements efficiency did not suffer, and that the convenience of Members would not gain much by reverting to the old arrangements, the House would be well advised not to accept the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he cordially endorsed the statement of the Prime Minister and was glad to support him. There was only one reform of Parliamentary procedure worth five minutes consideration, and that was the abolition of the House of Lords.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 255; Noes, 180. (Division List No. 39.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood, RtHn.SirAlex.F.
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bell, Richard
Benn, JohnWilliams(Devonp't
Benn, W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo
Berridge, T. H D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J H.(Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T R. (Essex, Maldon)
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
B land, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey
Bowerman, C. W.

Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt Hn.James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish, Rt. Hn.Victor C.W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm.J(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow)
Corbett, CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E
Craik, Sir Henry
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col.Alan (Hereford,S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, Sir W.Evans (T'rHam.
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Hall, Frederick
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardie, JKeir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B.(Worc'r.)
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazleton, Richard
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, FWF.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Higham, John Sharp
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hodge, John
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Hon Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hunt, Rowland
Idris, T. H. W.
Jackson, R. S.
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn.Col. W.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Liddell, Henry
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood, Rt Hn.Lt.-Col. A.R.
Long, Rt-Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacVeigh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeagh, Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Arthur, William
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G.Croydon (Launceston
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Marnham, F J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morse, L. L.
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, CharlesN(Doncast'r
Nicholson, Wm G. (Petersfield
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, JWynford(Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, RobertJohn(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reddy, M.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T.F(Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Robertson, Rt.Hn.E. (Dundee)
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A.H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sears, J. E
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sutherland, J. E.
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark)
Thorne, William
Thornton, Percy M.
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, A. (ElginandNairn
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, A.Stanley(York, E. R.)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Theodore Taylor.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Arnold-Forster, RtHn.Hugh O.
Asquith. Rt. Hn.HerbertHenry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bowles, G. Stewart
Burke, E. Haviland-
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt.HnRichardKnight
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galw'y
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson,WH.(StPancras, N.)
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Henderson, J.M(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lea, Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras, E.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Lewis, John Herbert
Long, Col. CharlesW(Evesham
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J.M(FalkirkB'ghs.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Iver,Sir Lewis (EdinburghW
M'Kenna, Reginald
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Sir G. Scott (Bradf'r
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel
Schwann, C. Duncan(Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley,Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot,Rt. Hn.J.B.(Oxf'dUniv
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R.(Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,JohnCathcart (Orkney)
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse,SirJ T.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Younger, George
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland and Sir Brampton Gurdon.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) in moving another Amendment, in paragraph (1), lines 2 and 3 to leave out "two of the clock for an afternoon sitting, and at nine of the clock for an evening sitting" and insert "a quarter to three of the clock," said he would state to the House the general scheme of these changes and the effect they would have upon the time-table of the House. The Government intended by these alterations to do three things. The first was to establish a single continuous sitting instead of the present double sitting. In the second place, they intended to change the hours of meeting and rising; and in the third place consequentially to re-adjust the rules as to questions and some minor matters. The principal objects of the Amendment were to substitute a certain and continuous sitting for a double sitting, and to make the hours of meeting and rising more convenient and suitable to Members generally than they were at present. He thought it would be the general opinion of the House that the effect of the fixed dinner-hour such as they had been enjoying—if he might use that word—during the last two or three years had not been satisfactory. In the first place, the hour and a half, from half-past seven to nine, or any similar duration of time at that period of the evening, was wasted for purposes of discussion. In the old days it was the most useful period of the sitting. It was the time in which a great deal of quiet business was done, and it was also the time—and he attached great importance to this—when modest, unobtrusive Members, if there were any such, and timid Members could have an opportunity of expressing their opinions, not to a large audience in the House of Commons, but to a large circle of readers in the country and could, at all events, accustom themselves to the atmosphere of the House, and to the peculiar attitude which every one found himself in who, without much experience, addressed the House. The dinner-hour afforded an opportunity of getting over this timid period of existence. [Laughter.] He did not think there was any need for laughter, and he was sure that some of those who laughed did not find it a laughing matter when they made their first oration in the House. This was, in his judgment, a useful time, and it was in his opinion a waste of time to suspend the actual sittings of the House for so long a period, a proceeding which meant that they must keep a great number of Members dangling about the House until the sitting was resumed. There were several other disadvantages in the present system. One of these was that when the House resumed at nine o'clock the difficulty of the shepherds in recalling their scattered sheep was enormous. Owing to the reluctance with which the sheep returned to the fold a spectacle was witnessed which did not contribute to the reputation, dignity, or efficiency of the House. Member after Member was put up to talk against time while the laggard members of the flock were coming down to the House. The result was that there was another waste of time of nearly an hour after nine o'clock, before real effective business began. Hon. Members went away to other and perhaps more attractive scenes and got out of touch with the House that they left. But there was a stronger reason than any of these. If regard was paid to the progress of the business of the House this interruption was most unfortunate. In 1902, when this rule was proposed, he remembered using an argument which always seemed to him an almost irrefutable argument. It was this. In the old days of continuous sittings, on certain days of the week what were called morning sittings were held. On those days the House met at two, rose at seven, and met again at nine. The first portion of the sitting was generally taken by the Government and the second by private Members. They were told that the arrangements with regard to morning sittings was convenient to Members, but when that period of the session came when the Government took all the time of the House, when the privilege of time disappeared so far as the private Member was concerned, what did the Government do? Did any Government ever propose at such a time to take morning sittings? There was no instance of it. Every Government knew that the way to get on with business was to have a continuous sitting. Therefore, however convenient to some Members this universal dinner-hour might be there was not a case on record of any Government asking for a morning sitting. He proposed that there should not be even a more moderate suspension than one hour and a half. There used to be an interval for the Speaker's chop, which began with a quarter of an hour and ran on in most cases to half an hour. That was supposed to be necessary for the sustenance of the Chair, and hon. members of the House were not slow to follow so illustrious an example. But this interruption had an evil effect, and it was not necessary in these days. When the change was brought about only one Member of the House, Mr. Speaker, was allowed to occupy the Chair. Now not only the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means but also the Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means could act as Speaker. These three gentlemen could take the Chair and relieve each other to that moderate extent of the duties in the chair. It was said that there must be some fixed stop in the business of the House, because otherwise there would be no opportunity of relieving the strain upon Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committee, or those engaged in piloting a great Bill through Committee. But that was not so. One could relieve another, and therefore he saw no inconvenience whatever in abolishing this interruption, this period of refreshment which, whether acknowledged by the rules or unacknowledged by the rules, had prevailed, and having a continuous sitting of the House. By the abolition of the interval of one and a half hours a corresponding amount of time was added to the working hours of the House. How were they to dispose of that one and a half hours? The Committee which considered the question proposed that it should be applied at the two ends of the sitting on the ground—and here he passed to the second object of the scheme which he proposed to the House—that the hours which now prevailed were inconveniently early and inconveniently late. Two o'clock as the hour for meeting was universally condemned. It was neither one thing nor the other. He could better understand the hour of meeting being ten or eleven. That would be an intelligible way of distributing the time of the House. But he did not recommend it. It would involve great dislocation of the business of the House and great confusion to Ministers of departments and all those Members who had business to attend to in the day. It would be also impossible to combine that hour with the work on Standing and other Committees which at the present time occupied so large a portion of the time and labour of the Members of the House, and which in the future would occupy a still larger amount of their energies. Two o'clock was condemned, and they proposed to move in the direction of making the sittings of the House more distinctly afternoon. Three o'clock had been suggested as being more convenient, but in order to have ease at the other end he suggested making it 2.45. Having met at 2.45 the Committee suggested that contentious business should end at 11.30, but he could well understand that for a large number of Members that hour was too late, therefore he suggested that contentious business should end at 11.15. The effect would be that where the House now met at 2 o'clock it was proposed that it should meet at 2.45. The adjournment from 7.30 to nine would no longer take place, and the opposed business which now came to an end at twelve o'clock would, accordingly, with this scheme cease at 11.15. By this scheme they still got the same number of working hours as at present, namely, eight and a half hours. That seemed to him to be a reasonable way of meeting the views and convenience of Members. He did not think they would be doing what was right as to their responsibilities to the country if they largely diminished the amount of time they devoted to the business of Parliament. His proposal maintained the position exactly as at present, and he commended it most strongly to the acceptance of the House. He would turn to Question time. He considered that one of the most important functions of a Member of Parliament was to ask Questions on subjects of public interest, and every one desired that the fullest opportunity should be given for the discharge of that important duty. From the valuable evidence which Mr. Speaker was good enough to give to the Procedure Committee, it would appear that, taking the experience of the last few weeks as a probable extreme limit of the time required for Questions, a very small addition to the time now afforded would be sufficient to ease the pressure. Under his proposal, five minutes more would be allowed, with the addition of any time that was saved from that allotted to private business. He had described the general scheme that the Government proposed with confidence to the House, believing that it would increase the comfort of Members, and also, what was more important, the efficiency of business. The House had always been accustomed to late hours. When he was first there no limit was placed on the time. They would sit until six in the morning one day, but perhaps the House would be counted out at six or seven in the evening on the next. He was not sure whether in those rather random days there were more hours spent than now, but it was done now with more regularity, and the debates, consequently, became more effective and more instructive. By these proposals they went, he thought, as far as was reasonably possible in that direction, both as regarded the beginning and the ending of the sitting, and he trusted the House would agree with them, if not entirely, at all events in the main. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph 1, line 2, to leave out the words 'two of the clock for an afternoon sitting, and at nine of the clock for an evening sitting,' and to insert the words 'a quarter to three of the clock'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he had put down an Amendment which would have the effect of making the hour of meeting three o'clock. The Prime Minister was perfectly correct in saying that the present hour of meeting was generally felt to be inconvenient, and he believed, from his experience on the Procedure Committee, that a number of Members would welcome the hour of meeting being changed to 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning; but if that were not to be done, then he would suggest that the House should follow the recommendation of the Committee and meet at 3 o'clock. The question was considerably discussed from all points of view by the Committee. With all respect to the Prime Minister, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had made out any case whatever for the sake of a quarter of an hour why they should deviate from the proposal of the Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Excepting that the later you meet the greater the difficulty you get in at the end. If you meet a quarter of an hour later, you will have to sit a quarter of an hour later to maintain the same length of sitting.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the Committee in fixing the time of meeting at three o'clock met the difficulty raised by the right hon. Gentleman by fixing the hour of adjournment at 11.30. The right hon. Gentleman had taken a quarter of an hour off the hour for adjourning, and fixed the time of meeting a quarter of an hour earlier. He did not think, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had made out a case for his proposal. He should be glad if arrangements could be made whereby this new Government, with the great democratic spirit in this House, would meet like any other business assembly at 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, and rise at a correspondingly early hour in the evening. With regard to the time for Questions, it was perfectly absurd for the Government to propose five minutes more, for Mr. Speaker in his evidence made it abundantly clear that a small extension of time would in nine cases out of ten enable every starred Question to be answered. Five minutes extra, however, was not sufficient. There should be at least fifty minutes or an hour given to Questions if necessary. Of course, by beginning Questions immediately private business was over they might gain sometimes five or ten minutes, but at other times they might not gain anything at all. He moved the Amendment in his name.

*MR. SPEAKER said it was necessary to get the words struck out of the Standing Order before the words of the Amendment could be put.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) said that, as a Member of the Committee on Procedure, he was bound to raise a protest against the manner in which they had been treated as a Committee. When the late Government brought forward on their own responsibility a scheme of procedure they were told that it was entirely contrary to precedent and that the subject ought to have been sent to a Committee upstairs. But what had been the result of sending the question upstairs on this occasion? The Committee divided on five occasions and four of the decisions arrived at had been entirely upset by the Government. There was hardly a proposition left, certainly on any main point, which was in accordance with the views of the Committee upstairs. The Prime Minister said that the House would sit exactly the same time, but he did not point out that the time he now proposed to take, in opposition to the views of the Procedure Committee, was time which was to be entirely devoted to Government work, and that the time he proposed to take off was that which very often belonged to private Members. When they knew what private Members' motions had now become, and that three hours was thought sufficient in which to impeach a pro-consul and condemn him unheard, he must say it was very undesirable that they should cut down that time, especially as they had been warned by Mr. Speaker that a debate which took only an extremely short period could hardly be concluded by the closure.

As to the time of meeting, in the discussions in the Committee the representatives of the Government said they extremely disliked the present condition of things, because it dealt with odd minutes, and it was far better to deal with round numbers in hours. If the House were going to take up these questions of hours they would be in the very difficulty which the Government themselves appreciated a few weeks ago when dealing with these odd minutes in Committee.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton. E.) said the hon. Member had consistently quoted his suggestions in the Committee as if they were those of the Government. He (Sir Henry) distinctly stated that he did not sit on the Committee as a member of the Government.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY said that he would modify his statement and say they were the suggestions of the Cabinet Minister who now laid this proposal before the House. Very strong arguments were used in the Committee with regard to the suspension of business, and in his opinion it was very desirable that there should be a short break in the middle of the sitting by way of adjournment. Not to have such a break might result in great inconvenience to those who were conducting a large Bill through Committee of the House, because it was obvious that a member of the Government could not leave his Amendments in the hands of another person, nor could the Chairman of Committees leave Amendments under discussion in the hands of another gentleman only introduced for a short time into the Chair. Further, the Government in laying down these proposals for there being no cessation of business had made no provision with regard to Bills in Committee. When Mr. Speaker was in the Chair they provided two reliefs if necessary, but they did not provide when in committee that the Deputy-Chairman, supposing the Chairman was absent, should have power to call an assistant-chairman to his aid. He believed that the adjournment from 7.30 to 9 had been of advantage to Ministers themselves, and certainly of advantage to the hard-working members on committees who, he was afraid, used to suffer internally from having to leave their meal to prevent a count out. With reference to Questions, if the Government desired to tie down the time with regard to Questions, they should have followed that up by the suggestion discussed in the Committee that Questions of purely local interest, and Questions which involved statistical replies and matters of that sort should be transferred from the Questions starred for oral answer to those answered by means of communication between the Members interested and the Minister in charge of the department concerned. If that were done it would relieve considerably the congestion and enable Questions to be got through in the forty-five minutes allotted. He regretted the action of the Government. He thought they would have been wiser to have stuck to the hour of three o'clock. They certainly ought not to diminish the time allotted to private Members, and he much regretted that they had seen fit to upset the careful decision of the Committee upstairs in favour of the Amendment now before the House.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he supported in the Committee upstairs the proposal that the House should meet at 2.45, and he did so because he thought it was a wise policy to get the preliminary business over in order that the actual business of the House should commence exactly at three o'clock. The hon. Member for the Ashford Division had regretted that the Government should attempt to reverse the decision of the Committee; but the House must remember that this was a very close decision. Seven of the Committee voted for meeting at three o'clock, and six voted for meeting at a quarter to three, so that opinion on the matter was nearly equally divided. The suggestion of the hon. Member that the Government had not treated the Committee fairly was a most unworthy suggestion. The matter was placed before the House in an unprejudiced way, and he hoped they would dispose of it and allow the House to rise at as early an hour as possible. For that reason he thought the House ought to meet at a quarter to three o'clock.

MR. T. M. HEALY said he thought the House would make a great mistake if it agreed to close the sittings at eleven o'clock. Those who were here for the purpose of seeing laws enacted would make a great mistake if they tolerated a proposal for the early rising of the House. Hon. Members from Ireland for the first time in their life saw some chance of democratic legislation. They had been waiting for it for a quarter of a century. Every measure of mischief that this House could pass for Ireland had already been passed. There was a perpetual Coercion Act, and there were other mischievous measures which had been passed at two, three, four, five, and six o'clock in the morning. Leaving out what was called the introduction of irreligion into the schools, he could see no prospect of any Bills which would bring him into conflict with this Government for the next five or six years. He wanted the Government not to surrender to Toryism or to "societyism" one inch of its powers or one minute of its time. It was most unfortunate that the Government, before the general mass of the members of the Liberal Party had had an opportunity of seeing what Tory obstruction would be, and before hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side had had a taste of their quality, should come down with these proposals. If they went back to the days of great measures they would find that every one of them had been advanced between midnight and four o'clock in the morning. If the Labour Members who desired to pass measures in favour of democracy thought that by appointing a quarter past eleven as the hour for rising it would be easier, they would find that on one pretext or another hon. Members would talk against time till that hour. The only chance of making progress was to sit late and tire other men down. Therefore, he deprecated the proposal that the House, in the one democratic Parliament which their eyes had seen, should rise at a quarter past eleven. He would ask hon. Gentlemen who were thinking of this question from the personal point of view to go back to the days of great measures; if they did so they would find, as was once well said, "Weariness is the great ally of Ministers." Men did not get tired, as a rule, until two or three o'clock in the morning. If hon. Members approved of the measures brought in, all they had to do was to listen to the Ministers proposing them. What great hardship was it to sit till twelve, or one, or two o'clock? They could go to sleep, and they could go to the smoking-room. There were plenty of books in the library. He respectfully thought that the House was depriving itself of the best weapon it possessed in acceding to this proposal of early hours. He regretted that private Members' time had not been abolished altogether. It was perfectly futile that men should sit from twelve to six debating with the greatest earnestness a Bill that would never go further. The reforms he looked forward to were not reforms of procedure, but reforms of the statute law. He was sorry to think they were not taking the best way of getting these reforms.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said he did not believe the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule prevented to a great extent the obstruction to which the hon. Member for North Louth had referred. What the Government intended was that time which ought to be given to the work of the House should not be given up to society. There were other proposals which must come before the Committee of the House, and which would take very much the direction desired by the hon. and learned Gentleman. One of the proposals was that if a measure passed the Second Reading in one session they might proceed with it in the next without its being reintroduced. It was no concession at all to meet at 2.45 instead of three. If the House met at 2.45 every one who wanted a seat must come at 2.45. Personally, he thought every seat in the House should be available for the Members when they came in except, of course, the seats upon the front Ministerial bench and the front Opposition bench, and they should be able to sit there as long as they liked. For that reason he thought it would be convenient to meet at three o'clock. In the Committee he moved that the hour should be three o'clock, and that was carried. He disagreed with the hon. Member who said that they should agree with all the Committee decided upon. This was eminently a matter for the House itself to decide.

*Mr. BELL (Derby) said he was in favour of the House meeting at 2.45 or even 2.30, in order that they might be able to rise at eleven. He and a number of his colleagues lived in the suburbs of London, on the Great Northern Railway system. The last train by which they could travel left King's Cross at 11.50, and if the House closed its debates at eleven they would be able to catch that train and get home. If debates were continued till 11.15 there would not be sufficient time left to drive to King's Cross on occasions when divisions were taken. If he remained in attendance to support the Prime Minister when possibly there might be a vote of censure before the House he would be obliged to look for an hotel for the night. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would agree to the rising of the House at eleven instead of 11.15. If the second sitting commenced at eight and lasted till eleven the same amount of time would be available on private Members' nights and Government nights.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said that the present scheme was that the House should meet at 2.45, and that immediately after private business Questions should begin. He put it to hon. Members who were habitually present at the time private business was taken, if it was not the case that it was almost impossible to tell from the Order Paper how long that private business would take. For instance, where there were a large number of petitions to be presented, followed by a conversation across the floor of the House on non-contentious private business, a good deal of time was consumed; whereas on other occasions, as on that afternoon, the private business might only last one minute. Every Minister and every Member who did not wish his Question or Questions to be missed the first time round, would have to be present at 2.45. He was anxious that what the Prime Minister described as one of the most important functions of the Members of the House, should have full scope; but it was notorious that Questions had already outrun the additional limits which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to give to them. Certainly it would be insufficient to permit of all starred Questions being answered across the floor of the House. The Prime Minister had said that the doing away with the present dinner interval would save an hour and a half in the Parliamentary day. He did not think that that was strictly correct. The nominal hour and a half might be saved; but the right hon. Gentleman knew that time after time during the past two or three years, thirty or forty minutes of that hour and a half were occupied by divisions, and that consequently the interval often lasted under an hour. He believed, therefore, that it was illusory to say that an hour and a half would be saved. The present proposal was that the House should sit from 2.45 to 11 or 11.15 as the case might be. He had never been in charge of a great Bill, had never occupied the Chair, nor been one of the Clerks of the House, but he could not help thinking, having been sometimes in charge of the structure and ventilation of the House, that some short interval would be necessary not only for the convenience of the members and servants of the House, but to enable the mess and litter of rubbish which accumulated on the floor to be cleaned up, to have the place swept and, especially during the summer months, to have the whole chamber cleared, the galleries emptied, the windows opened and a strong draft of air blown through, so as to make the House more healthy. That necessity had been making itself more acutely felt every session he had been in the House.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said he wished to throw out the suggestion that non-contentious private business should be taken instead of at the beginning of the sitting, along with the contentious private business at nine o'clock in the evening.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that it would be in the recollection of the House that the Prime Minister when the Committee was appointed stated that certain suggestions would be given to the Committee who, however, were to be unfettered in making their Report. This afternoon the Prime Minister had informed the House that by saving the present dinner interval the Committee had an hour and a half to deal with, but the Committee were not informed that the House was to sit each day the same length of time as at present. The two proposals did not correspond. On another point the Government had not treated the House with proper respect, and that was in regard to the suspension of the sitting. He thought he was right in saying that the Committee were almost unanimous in the opinion that there should be a suspension of some sort. Like the noble Lord the Member for Chorley, he felt very strongly that from every point of view—for the benefit of the officials of the House, the health of the Members, and the cleanliness of the chamber, a suspension was necessary. He did not agree with the noble Lord in regard to his proposal as to Questions, but in reference to the proposal for the utilisation of the five or seven minutes after private business he agreed that they might be employed in answering Questions which under present circumstances were left unanswered. As to what might happen in the future, he did not understand what the functions of the sort of Committee upon which he had served were, but he might remark that they were carefully kept in the dark as to any substantive proposal which might be made in regard to the question as a whole. He thought they should have been informed of the whole scheme, in order to show them how the Government proposed to deal with any shortage of hours which their recommendations might involve. There were many Members who thought that the work performed by the House might be got through in an hour's less time, and if that was so, there would be no necessity for accounting for the loss, but if the time clipped off the hours of the House was to be made up in other ways, he maintained now, as he did in Committee, that they should have been put in possession of the proposals of the Administration for making up for the lost time. He did not entertain any strong opinion as to the alteration of the hour from three to a quarter to three, but there again, if the deliberations of the Committee were to have any weight, he thought they ought to have before them the full and complete scheme of the Government.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said he supported the Amendment, and hoped the House would adopt it. The contention of the Government was that the number of hours that the House should sit was their affair, but in his judgment that was not so. If the House decided to meet at three o'clock and adjourn at eleven the Government would have to adapt their business to meet the shorter hours. He would, however, support the Government on any proposal for the purpose of economising the time of the House, such, for instance, as the shortening of speeches and in any other suggested method which was necessary to bring the business of the House within the limits of an eight-hours working day. He would ask hon. Members opposite to consider this proposal in the light of their being workmen and the Government their employers who refused to give them a shorter working day: he asked them to fight for the Amendment. An hon. friend behind him had said, as was perfectly true, that this was the most democratic House of Commons he had ever seen, and he asked hon. Members to take the opportunity of rendering the House more democratic still by its methods. In the Committee upstairs he supported the motion that the House should meet at three and adjourn at eleven, and he believed that if that proposal were adopted they would be laying down the manner in which Parliament would best attend to the work it had to do.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) regretted very much that the Govenment could not leave this question in regard to the hours of meeting which affected the convenience of the House as a whole to Members themselves. He thought they were all very good judges of what suited their convenience, and made for the business capacity of the House of

Commons. Personally he did not care very much whether the House met at two or three o'clock, but he did hope that when they had a rule that the House should adjourn at eleven or a quarter past eleven, the House would adjourn at that time and that there would be no suspension of the rule. He had always protested against the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule, and when he was told by the Whips to vote for that suspension he did so with very great reluctance indeed. He was told that they were going to have no interval for dinner, but when the House was in Committee it was extremely convenient to know when the Chairman was going to get out of the Chair. The absence of this information involved the private Member stopping in his place until he did leave the Chair. Another great difficulty for a private Member who was following a private Bill in the House, and had a number of Amendments to it, was that he did not know whether he would be called upon to move those Amendments in the course of five minutes or half an hour. It was a great hardship that hon. Members should be put in this position. After the evidence which had been given before the Committee, he hoped the Government would reconsider their proposal and leave this question to the decision of the House.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said that perhaps there was one aspect of the question which hon. members would think it well to consider before they voted for the half-hour adjournment. Speaking of himself as a member of the Kitchen Committee, he might point out that the refreshment department found it impossible to provide dinners for all the Members during the half hour. He had been a member of the Kitchen Committee for several years, and all the members of that Committee knew that it would be out of their power to provide accommodation for the number of persons who would present themselves during the half hour. He hoped that aspect of the question would weigh with hon. Gentlemen when they came to a decision, and would incline them to agree to the rational proposals which the Prime Minister had made. He had been a witness of strange scenes which had occurred during the time of the half-hour suspension in the past. He very well recollected Mr. Handell Cossham addressing the House to empty benches while he alone sat listening to him on the other side. They should get rid of such an unseemly proceeding if the proposals of the Prime Minister were adopted. Members would in that case be able to run out between seven and nine o'clock and get what they required. It did not, in his mind, much matter at what hour they commenced their proceedings in the day. He wanted to begin as early as possible, and he did not want to support the proposal of the hon. Member that they should meet at three instead of a quarter to that hour. When, however, they came to the proposal that they should terminate their proceedings at a quarter to eleven o'clock he should go into the lobby in support of it. He thought for meeting, half-past two would be a reasonable compromise, but he could not support the proposal of the hon. Member. He thought they ought to give a loyal support to the Prime Minister, and he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman could not see his way clear to meet them about the hour of rising. He hoped the House would agree to the earlier meeting and the earlier rising.

*Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) supported the Amendment, and also hoped that the Amendment as to eleven o'clock would be accepted. The alterations had been framed by the Government with a view of maintaining the same number of hours of debate in this House as had prevailed in times past. It seemed to him that there was no peculiar virtue in maintaining that particular number of hours, and no other legislature in the world sat for eight and a half hours. The shortening of the hours would, he was sure, not detract from the value of the debates, especially if some limit was put upon the duration of the speeches. When that took place, as he hoped it would, there would not be the necessity for Members to be occupied 8½ hours a day in this House. He reminded the House that in years to come from now onwards, the House would not only sit during the early months of the year, but in the autumn months also, and therefore it appeared to him that they could very well limit this time. If the Government could see their way, in view of the subsequent reforms that would take place in limiting the number of hours, they might also accept the moderate Amendment with regard to the quarter of an hour at the commencement.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) congratulated the hon. Member for Chippenham on his suggestion for a time-limit for speeches. If the Prime Minister reduced the time available for private Members then, unless fewer of them spoke in future than had spoken in the past, it would be impossible to get through the business. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman ought to introduce a time-limit. There was a good deal to be said upon that subject, but as the House was anxious to come to a division now he would not proceed further upon it. After Easter, however, he hoped they would be at liberty to put down Amendments with regard to this matter and have a discussion upon them. Why any one should wish to make a speech of an hour and a quarter long when they could say all they wanted to say in twenty minutes neither Mr. Speaker nor the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister nor he himself knew. He made these few remarks in the hope that the Prime Minister would take this matter up and consider the question before the Committee sent down its final report.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said Parliament had more to do year by year than it could possibly accomplish. Whether they enlarged the session or shortened the duration of speeches the fact would remain that a large portion of the work they had to do would be undone. He remembered the table of hours available for Parliament which was presented to the House when the late Prime Minister was passing the Procedure Rules of 1902. It was that table which induced him to vote for the longest hours that were proposed, because he believed the effacacy of Parliament would be diminished if the hours were shortened.

Question put and negatived.

Question proposed, "That these words 'a quarter to three of the clock' be there inserted."

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND moved, as an Amendment to the Amendment, to leave out "a quarter to." He said he did so with no desire to obstruct, but because the matter was discussed in the Committee and they recommended that three o'clock should be the hour of meeting. That being so, he thought that recommendation ought to be considered.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

"To leave out the words 'a quarter to'."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he was sorry he could not accept the proposal. It was quite true that the Committee had recommended three o'clock, but they had also recommended that the House should rise at 11.30. He proposed to take a quarter of an hour off one end of the sitting and add it to the other.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said if the right hon. Gentleman would consent to 11 o'clock as the hour of rising his hon. friend would not press the Amendment.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he was always ready to make a bargain. If he understood that a proposal to meet at a quarter to three would be acceptable on condition that the sitting closed at 11 o'clock, he should be willing to agree to that arrangement.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS complained that the effect of this proposal would be to reduce the time for private Members' Motions from three hours to two and a half hours.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked leave to withdraw his Amendment, but leave was not granted.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 377; Noes, 88. (Division List No. 40.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton

Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delaney, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E Hopkinson
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S)
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John

Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus, Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw
Nicholls, George
Nicholson Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklaw, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert N.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan

Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E.(Manchester)
Scott, A. H(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hon. Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal

Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Abel(Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Vivain, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John(Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A(Elgin and Nairn)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt Hon. Victor C. W.

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James(Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.

Forster, Henry William.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent, Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F.(Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee, Arthur H(Hants., Fareham
Legg, Col. Hon. Heneage

Liddell, Henry
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lonsdale and Mr. Claude Hay.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Words inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (2), line 1, by leaving out the words "one of the clock at the evening sitting," and inserting the words, "half-past eleven of the clock"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Amendment proposed—

"To the Standing Order, in paragraph (3), line 1, to leave out the words, 'half-past seven of the clock and at midnight,' and insert the words, 'eleven of the clock,'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) pointed out that the rights of private Members would be further curtailed by the operation of the proposed Amendment. Instead of having from nine to twelve for Motions, they would only have from half-past eight to eleven. Of course that might have a very desirable effect in limiting the duration of speeches. If they were to have the same length of speeches as they had been accustomed to in the past, it really would be quite impossible for the House to come to a decision unless they did so after only two or three Members had spoken. There would be no time for the reply on behalf of the Government. After the wails he had heard from all parts of the House as to encroachments on private Members' time, he could not help smiling at the proposal that the dog's tail was to be bitten off until it was reduced to three inches. He thought it was hard on private Members. He hoped the Prime Minister would take steps for the limitation of the duration of speeches.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well—at least he imagined so—that he was a partisan of short speeches. He had always supported the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member for the Chelmsford Division that the duration of speeches should be limited. Anything that could be done in that direction would have his blessing. He would point out that it was not the Government that was curtailing the time of private Members; they were willing to give a quarter of an hour longer, but hon. Members magnanimously declined it.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said the length of the tail did not arise on this question. They were deciding at what point they would begin to measure the tail. He supported the Prime Minister's proposal, but when they came to page 21 of the Standing Orders, in order to decide whether the tail should begin at eight or half-past eight, then would be the time to discuss the matter.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he had no objection to the House meeting at a quarter to three of the clock, and he thanked his right hon. friend the Prime Minister for adopting his (Mr. Morton's) Amendment to rise at 11 o'clock; he was also in favour of speeches being reduced to ten minutes, especially those from the Front Benches. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sat there had come to think that they were not capable of being there unless they could speak for an hour. The papers would not now report these long speeches, therefore there was no use in making them.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 66 ; Noes, 379. (Division List No. 41.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn SirAlex.F.
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy(Winchester)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish,Rt Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cheetham, John Frederick
Coates,E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S
Craik, Sir Henry
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur

Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Liddell, Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G(Petersfield)
Percy, Earl

Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S(Sheffield, Ecclesal)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Smith,F. E.(Liverpool,Walton
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker,Col. W. H.(Lancashire)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Colonel Legge and Mr. T. L. Corbett.

NOES.

Abraham, William(Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen,A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith,Rt Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont,Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams(Devonprt
Benn,W(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton,T. D(Derbyshire,N.E.
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. D.

Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn RichardKnight
Cave, George
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J(S.Pancras,W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow)
Corbett,C H(Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E).
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William

Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W. H (St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Duncan,Robert(Lanark, Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford,S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)

Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J. M(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
King,Sir HenrySeymour(Hull)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir JosephF(Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W.H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas

Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J. M(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Fredecic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G. Croydon(Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryM'd
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Philipps, Col.Ivor(S'thampton)

Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson,Rt. Hn.E. (Dundee)
Robertson, SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, Chas. E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)

Thomas, Abel(Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,Sir A.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J. W.H(Somerset,E
Thorne, William
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.
Williamson,A.(Elgin and Nairn
Willson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,Sir JT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Words inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (3), line 2, by leaving out the words "half-past." —(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph (5), line 1, to leave out the words 'twelve and half-past,' and insert the words 'eleven and.'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof."

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Debate arising.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MARTIAL LAW IN NATAL—MOTION FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) said he hoped the House would believe him when he said it was with the greatest regret that he now rose to move that "The House do now adjourn." In the first place the House ought to be reminded that all statements by way of news coming from South Africa should be received with a great deal of care, and conclusions based on those statements should be come to with considerable reserve. We had had bitter experience of South African information coming through ordinary channels, and he wished to say, before proceeding further, that the statements he made, founded on news from South Africa, were made with that reserve which experience told them was only right. The facts of the case that had given rise to this Motion for the adjournment were briefly explained on the previous Thursday as follows. There were two sources of irritation in the Richmond district—one was the imposition of the poll tax which, according to official information, was not to be collected until May 1st, the other was discontent with the action of a certain magistrate who had been since cashiered for good reason shown. On February 8th, a a body of police under an inspector proceeded to a place near Richmond to arrest certain malcontents. The arrest was accomplished, and on the way to Richmond the body of police was beset by a rescue party. According to the news received there were no good grounds for assuming that that rescue party meant to do any serious damage to the arresting policemen. So far as could be made out nothing more serious than a civil riot was contemplated. At a certain point of the trouble one of the natives appeared either to have seized the bridle of the inspector's horse or to have struck him across the face. As the result of that aggressive action on the part of the native the policeman drew a revolver and shot him dead. Upon that, the riot assumed rather an alarming character, and the result was that two policemen were shot. Since February 8th, when that happened, there had been no attempt to riot. Since then, although the disaffected country has been scoured by native policemen, by militia, and by Natal Mounted Police, no evidence had been collected of any serious or organised attempt at rebellion. No evidence had been collected to justify the rumour that the Richmond affair was the beginning of serious native trouble in Natal. All the information which had been collected simply went to show that the natives objected to a poll tax in the same way as we objected to an increase of the income-tax, and they also objected very seriously to the proceedings of this particular magistrate. In view of the fact that such a comparatively mild affair as happened outside Richmond, and which gave rise to the proclamation of martial law, he would, lest he did injustice to Natal, admit that Natal stood in a special position in this matter. He had been through this Colony; he had talked with some of the natives and with some of the more prominent politicians. It was perfectly plain to anybody who had been there that the state of mind in Natal with regard to natives and white men was a very special state of mind. It was necessary to look at the bare mathematical problem that there were ten natives to every white man, and that even the civil law was carried out with a certain amount of unpleasant harshness to the natives. He had seen it himself and had expostulated with his white friends with regard to this harshness even under the civil law. But when it came to martial law with all its horrible possibilities, administered by a court composed exclusively of Militia, without a single member of such a court being able to approach the problem raised in an impartial way, it was far worse. [Loud cries of "Oh!"] He did not mean impartial in an offensive sense, but in the sense that the court was composed of men who were bound by the nature of the case to have what he could only describe as racial prejudice; men who were bound to have that extraordinary bias which did grow up, and which he supposed would grow up in every country where there was only one white man for every ten natives. When martial law was administered by such a court the position became very serious indeed, and was such as to justify the Home Government in taking very decisive and firm action upon it. His first point was that in all the evidence at present to hand they could not see that any circumstance ever arose in Natal that could justify this proclamation of martial law. His second point was that this incident took place on February 8th and martial law was proclaimed on February 9th; that the incident took place at a time when there was no martial law in the Colony, at a time when the civil law was still in operation, yet the natives accused of the murder of the policemen were tried by martial law. Was martial law to be made retrospective in the future? Bad as martial law undoubtedly was and unjustified as those were, as he thought, who declared it, ten thousand times more unjustifiable was it that this negation of all law should be made retrospective, and to cover acts committed previously to its being proclaimed. While martial law was being used as the medium for the trial of these natives the ordinary courts of the land were sitting every day. There had never been up to the present time, since February 8th, a suspension of the operations of the Civil Courts of Natal. In fact the Governor-General advised Lord Elgin that on March 15th he strongly urged his Ministers to transfer this matter from martial law to the ordinary criminal courts and the Ministers refused. His third point was that the period of duration of martial law had been an altogether illegal period. There had been no act of violence since February 8th to justify the Ministers of Natal in proclaiming martial law in that Colony, yet from the 9th up to the present time martial law had been in existence. In the Jamaica case Mr. Justice Blackburn ruled that when Mr. Governor Eyre had maintained martial law for thirty days after serious rebellion had ceased, he seriously exceeded the prerogative of the Crown. What were they to say of the Natal case where martial law had been maintained not for thirty days but for nearly double that time, when there was no rebellion, no armed resistance or general rising, no serious threat on the part of the black population to the white? After the whole of the country had been scoured and no evidence had been obtained of any rising, martial law had been kept up and twelve men shot for a crime for which two men had been summarily shot at the time it was committed. He did not wish to be unfair to Natal, but he was bound to take into consideration the things which had been published day after day in the Natal Press.

They were told that the political authorities had given this matter impartial consideration, but a strange light was thrown on that statement when they found that crowded public meetings addressed by orators in Pietermaritzburg and Durban had actually passed resolutions calling upon the Ministers to execute the natives. When judgment was given by politicians influenced by meetings like these they were entitled on this side, though 7,000 miles away, calm and unbiassed because we were 7,000 miles away, to consider whether the safeguards against injustice were real. In a speech on March 9th the Minister of Justice of Natal himself said—

> "The Government was determined to stamp out the disaffection, and if blood must be shed he hoped that it would be shed quickly."

That might have been a very proper observation on the part of a white man who was not a Minister, but it was a very improper observation for a Minister of Justice. The verdict in the trial came before him, and they were justified after all in doubting the judicial character of the advice which he tendered to the Government. He did not wish to provoke any ill-feeling between the Mother Country and the Colonies by this debate. He left the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench to do that sort of work. [Loud OPPOSITION cries of "Oh" and "Withdraw."] He had nothing to withdraw. Speeches had been delivered from the Front Opposition Bench for purely partisan purposes which inflamed opinion in South Africa. ["Withdraw."]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. Member had said anything unparliamentary I should have called him to order.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD said that under the circumstances he was not going to be a party to a division which might be forced upon the House by those who believed that the Government had no right to interfere at all. What he wanted to get from the Government was a statement regarding their intentions as to martial law in Natal in the future. Natal was not merely responsible to herself for her action in the administration of martial law, but to the whole Empire. As a British Colony she had inherited the idea and the tradition of liberty which was not Natalian, but British. If Natal did something which made us close our mouths when we should like to criticise acts such as were going on in the Congo State, that did not concern Natal alone but the whole Empire, and this House ought to be jealous in guarding against it. Natal had a right to self-government, but it was an intolerable claim on the part of any Colony to say that any and every deed done by any Colonial Government in any circumstances might be earmarked by that Government as something which was internal to itself and over which the House of Commons and His Majesty's Government should exercise no control. He regretted that now they had to think of these twelve men, condemned in such circumstances, having been done to death in the presence of their relatives and fellow-tribesmen, and for reasons which this country would not have tolerated for a moment if they had been white and not black men. And he regretted much that the petulant action of the Government of Natal should have had such an effect on the Home Government. They all knew that a general election was taking place this year in Natal, and, though he did not say that it was the only reason which influenced the action of Wednesday and Thursday last, it undoubtedly was one of the reasons. Political considerations could not help entering into the calculations of the Natal Government. In this case the general characteristics of martial law warranted a much firmer attitude than His Majesty's Government had taken up. It was also important to note that the Colony had appealed to us for troops. Supposing the consequences of the present action led to a native rising and the necessity of maintaining a large police force of troops in the disaffected districts, the British taxpayer would have to find the money, and the Government was responsible for what occurred. Moreover, there was to be a Bill of Indemnity. He was returned to Parliament to protect the interests and to voice the opinions of a constituency which was more than twice as large as the white population of Natal, and he for one objected to this Bill of Indemnity being made a mere formal affair. When the Colonial Vote came on he and his friends would have something to say on this matter. A Bill of Indemnity ought not to be a mere formal affair, but His Majesty's

Government ought to satisfy themselves that everything that could be done to make justice possible had been done. In Natal also the natives were not represented in the Government, and this was a special reason why the Government ought to have been very careful not to allow the Natal Government to force it into the present position. He assured the House that this matter presented itself in too serious a light for anyone to cast about wild recriminations. He felt perfectly certain that when the facts were known and when an impartial judgment was passed upon the unhappy and unfortunate events that had taken place in Natal, every Party in this country and every self-governing Colony would be prepared to support His Majesty's Government in taking stronger action than they had. They would then see that by refusing to sanction the execution of these twelve men the Government would have taken just and reasonable action, and one that offered no menace to the rights and liberties of South Africa or of any other British Colony. He moved, "That the House do now adjourn."

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby), in seconding the Motion, said that their purpose was to call attention to the grave danger resulting from the proclamation of martial law in Natal and the desire to assert the right and the duty of the House of Commons and of the Government to intervene and to express an opinion in matters of this kind. His purpose therefore was to condemn this martial law, to applaud the Government for having intervened, and to say that if they had a complaint to make it was that the Government had not gone far enough. He would venture to address himself not so much to the fate of the natives, apart from asking the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether he would tell the House if it were a fact that two natives referred to in the public Press as having refused to pay the poll tax had been condemned by court-martial to be shot, and whether he had any further information to give to the House—apart from that he would address himself to the right and duty of His Majesty's Government and this House to express an opinion and, if need be, to intervene in matters of martial law. An extraordinary misapprehension appeared to prevail in the minds of some hon. Members and in newspapers on one side in this country as to the right and the duty on the part of the Government to intervene. It appeared to be thought that the home Government never intervened. He had a list of occasions between the years 1894 and 1900 when the home Government intervened by refusing assent to various measures far less dangerous than martial law passed by self-governing Colonies through both Houses of the Legislature. The Colonies in question were Newfoundland, Natal, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and the Cape of Good Hope, and the home Government had refused assent on twelve occasions and conditionally refused assent on twenty occasions, making a total of thirty-two occasions on which, mostly under the guidance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, Acts passed by these Colonial Governments had been vetoed in effect by the British Government. If that could be done in regard to such matters as alien immigration and reforms of the marriage law, surely this House had a right to intervene when the native population, to whom we stood in a special degree of responsibility, was placed under a law which was the abrogation of all law, and which had ended in twelve of them being shot at the very time when the Lord Chancellor and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council were discussing whether it was legal to shoot them or not. If that was not a justification for the action of his hon. friend to-night and for intervention on the part of His Majesty's Government he should like to know what was. But let him probe a little more closely into the question of martial law. Curiously enough, martial law had nothing whatever to do with the Ministry of the Colony. His hon. friend had made no reference to the resignation of the Ministry of Natal in his opening statement, and he thought it was just as well, because that matter was not now in question. It was no doubt exceedingly unfortunate that the Natal Government did resign on this ground, but they were not the persons principally concerned. He would read to the House the revised regulations for the colonial service under which martial law was proclaimed—

> "He (the officer in command of His Majesty's land forces) carries into execution on his own authority the sentences of courts-martial, excepting sentences of death, which must first be approved on behalf of the King by the officer administering the civil Government."

So that the House would see that once martial law had been proclaimed the civil Government of the Colony ceased to have any effective interest in court-martial cases. That was the strong reason for this Motion. The Imperial Parliament was the ultimate responsible authority for the death of the twelve men who had been executed. The responsibility was thus transferred from the Colony to this country. One word as to our responsibility to the natives. He believed he was right in saying that in the Commission which appointed the Governor of Natal he was given especial charge of the Zulus; he was appointed paramount chief of the Zulus. That fact placed a different complexion on this case, for the Government was responsible for the acts of the Governor. If he did not do what they told him they could dismiss him, and therefore in a special sense they were responsible for anything done to the Zulus. Thus, when martial law arose this country had a special responsiblity. It was well to recognise, in order to be wholly fair in this debate, that the Governor of the Colony did recommend the course, which he bitterly regretted that His Majesty's Government did not enforce. The civil courts were sitting, and there was nothing whatever to prevent these twelve men being tried in the civil court, which would have been a fairer tribunal than a court-martial. Even hon. Members of the Opposition would admit that [Cries of "No"]. Having sat on a court-martial himself, he must confess that the legal knowledge—which, after all, was the main thing—of the ordinary officer, although no one would impugn his honour, integrity, or humanity, could not be rated high. Why not have transferred the trial of these men to a civil court? There was this to be said to the credit of the Governor of the Colony, that he himself on March 15th did recommend to his Ministers that the proposal to inflict the death sentence should be withdrawn and that they should be tried by a civil tribunal. Now came a curious point. It appeared that Sir H. McCallum was not aware of the peculiar position in which he stood as Governor. That position was clearly stated in a Memorandum sent by Lord Carnarvon to all Governors of Colonies, and was still in force. It was no part of his duties to consult his Ministers. The Memorandum was dated January 30th, 1867, and said that a misapprehension had arisen in Antigua, and it was desirable that all the Colonies should understand how matters stood. The Memorandum said—

> "All exceptional legislation, especially martial law, is at variance with the spirit of English law. It is only to be justified in view of the imminence of armed rebellion."

and it went on to say—

> "The Governor cannot by any instructions be relieved from the obligation of deciding these matters for himself."

He, and he alone, was responsible under the Crown, and therefore the Governor in the present case probably committed an error of judgment in referring it to the Ministers of the Colony. He (Major Seely) believed he had shown to the House that this country had intervened in matters of less gravity than this. He had endeavoured to show that we had a special responsiblity to the Zulus in particular and the native races in general, and he had tried to show that in the matter of martial-law we were always responsible. In conclusion, he asked the House to reflect before they decided that they were to abandon to a self-governing Colony everything which they held dear. A spirit seemed to have grown up in the last year or two that the British Empire was a thing which had no common principle, that it was to be bound together by other means or no means at all. If they were to abandon the principles upon which the Empire was founded, better a thousand times the Empire were shattered to pieces. In the great principle of common respect for the law, the right of every man, black, white, or yellow, to have a fair trial before a properly constituted court, was summed up the whole justification for the Empire, and if they were to abandon it, or allow others to abandon it, it were better the Empire had never been. In that spirit he seconded the Motion, believing that we must hold fast to the principles of Empire and, if necessary, assert them from the home country. All lesser matters might be left to the other parts of the Empire; but to the guiding principles of Empire, namely, justice, law, and mercy, we must ever hold fast.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. J. R. Macdonald.*)

*CAPTAIN KINCAID-SMITH (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon) said he wished to enter his protest, which he believed was shared by a great many hon. Members on both sides, that the hon. Member for Leicester should have thought it necessary to bring forward this Motion at all. The speech of the hon. Member was moderate in tone as reflecting his opinions, but when read by our people in the Colonies it would cause a very deep feeling of resentment. On several occasions lately there had been discussions in this House in relation to South Africa, but those discussions had not been for its good, and in the speeches of some hon. Members there had not been a word of sympathy or of consolation or of any practical suggestion for those who, whether Boers or Britons in South Africa, we all wished to see in closer contact. The hon. Member who seconded this Motion had brought forward some of the rather remarkable arguments of which he was so fond, but there was not one word to allay the resentment now felt in Natal and throughout South Africa, not one word which would restore confidence in the Liberal Party. There was not a section in the community of South Africa that would read the hon. Member's speech with any feeling of pleasure. It was an insult to our people in the Colonies not to credit them with an equal standard of justice and honour and conscientiousness to that of our people at home. Was it not an insult to the Natal Government to say that they could not manage the administration of martial law in the same way that we could? It was an injustice to the men who did their best when their services were required during the war not to credit them with the same sense of what was due to the native races as was held by the most humane and conscientious of their countrymen at home. For the same reason he had always objected to the term of slavery being applied to the case of the Chinese in the Transvaal. [AN HON. MEMBER: What do you call it?—and Another HON. MEMBER: When is a Liberal not a Liberal?] All agreed that South Africa was the one country above all others whose affairs should be kept outside Party politics. Her people were touchy to a degree over any criticism or suspicion of interference—they magnified every trouble. Unfortunately, colonial affairs were becoming more and more a matter of Party controversy. [Interruption.]

*MR. SPEAKER: I would appeal to hon. Members. The hon. Member is addressing the House for the first time.

*CAPTAIN KINCAID-SMITH (continuing) urged that the House should keep colonial affairs outside Party politics, just as was done in regard to foreign affairs, lest we should disturb good relations with foreign Powers. Surely we ought to treat with equal respect the feelings and susceptibilities of our own Colonies. In South Africa there was material for a magnificent pillar of the Empire, but we could not build it up on Party politics; and he pleaded with the House to remove it once and for all from that region. There was grave dissatisfaction, not only in Natal and South Africa generally, but, he believed, throughout all the Colonies, at the policy of the Government, as indicated by some of the utterances of the Under-Secretary; and he would beg the Government not to allow themselves to be pushed by the more eager, or should he say the more humane section of their followers along the fatal path leading to the policy of interference, to which he and many other supporters of the Government would offer the most resolute opposition. Could not the Prime Minister give some assurance which would dispel the intense feeling in the Colony against interference now or in the future? If the Government were to gain and retain the confidence and respect of our countrymen in South Africa it would not be by such debates as these, in which so much was said to wound and hurt their feelings, but by paying regard to their sentiments, and by remembering how they had suffered in the late war. [AN HON. MEMBER: So did we.] The House should understand that the colonists did not understand their

Parliamentary and Party methods any more than a great many hon. Members understood the prejudice and sentiments of the colonists, and if this country did lose their confidence and respect we would be paying a very high price for it.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken of the offence that had been given to the people of Natal partly by the action of His Majesty's Government and partly by the action of certain sections of the House. It was well when a proposition like that was put forward to remember that the people of Natal were not all of one opinion. There was a common tendency among politicians in this country to assume that when a colonist spoke he spoke for the whole of the population of his colony. Some of the wisest politicians in Natal disapproved as much as any one in this House of the line of action which had been criticised by the hon. Member who had moved this Motion. They were told not to offend the feelings of our countrymen in South Africa. What about the offence given to the feelings of the people of this country? Were the feelings of such a small population as that of Natal to outweigh the feeling of the people of this country and to shut their mouths? From the point of view of hon. Members opposite, it appeared to be the duty of every colony to create its own imbroglio, and the sole duty of the mother country to provide the military force to get them out of it. The hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon had insisted that there was among the population of Natal the same standard of justice as obtained in this country. It must be perfectly obvious to anyone that the same standards of justice did not obtain in Natal. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] If hon. Members opposite would bear with him he would give them a quotation from a journal which was very much of their own colour, called the *Prince*, which was published in Durban on November, 25th, 1904, at a time when the present panic and excitement were not on foot. It was headed "The Competition Cake," and the opening lines indicated that a species of competition had been held in this journal in order to get the best suggestions from readers of the paper for dealing with the native question, and the cake was awarded to the gentleman who made the best suggestions. The gentleman who sent the following was awarded the cake—

> "The best way to tackle this native question is to start at the head of affairs with the present Government; remove them and elect those that will take an interest in the whites; remove the present magistrate that is so lenient with the native (J. S.); do absolutely away with the ricksha, this is where most of the crime comes from; on no account allow the native police to arrest a white person, but give power to the white to use the revolver on any native that dares to lay hands on the white; do away with the present system that they have at the Court House of allowing the black brutes to mix with and handle the whites,—a more disgraceful thing to civilization I have never heard of; do away with black guards overseeing the white convicts, which they are at present doing; keep all natives off the footpaths and give power to the whites to knock off natives whenever they come in contact with them. Make a stiff law against them for insolence. Make it a capital sentence for rape (or immorality) and treat them as dogs. I suggest that we have Transvaal magistrates to hear all Kaffir cases (Boers, I mean). Any whites found sympathising with the natives to be tarred and feathered or hanged to the nearest tree that is handy. It is the native sympathiser that we have to fight against."

This was the sort of literature which was circulated in a journal of good standing. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] It was a journal of rather high price circulating amongst the upper classes in Natal. This was quite sufficient to prove that there had been a certain degree of change in the last year or two, and that a very serious deterioration had been going on in the attitude of our colonists towards native problems. Since the Zulu War there had been no violent clashing between the Natal Government and the natives. This was largely due to the fact that the Minister dealing with the native affairs was a man of exceptionally good feeling and good judgment. But they had now to face the fact that the native problem in Natal marched with the problem in a neighbouring colony. The imposition of the poll tax was undertaken with the view of furthering the provision of Chinese labour for the mines in the Transvaal. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies, to whose sagacity and judgment he desired to pay every tribute, and whose knowledge of South African affairs from the inside was of the greatest value to them all, had been led to assent to the proposition that the native troubles in Natal had something to do with the Ethiopian movement. This was not the case. They arose solely out of the imposition of the poll tax, as unwarrantable a tax as had ever been imposed in our time. The Empire was not only morally responsible in the eyes of the world for what might happen in Natal, but the financial responsibility for any military operations which might be involved would fall upon us. Suppose the Natal Government were to precipitate a general native rising, was the mother country to provide *ad libitum* the forces required and not to be able to say one word in the way to control? He desired to associate himself with the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division in the view that if that was what Empire was to mean, the Empire had better be wound up. In any case it speedily would be wound up, for no Empire could last on such terms. In the 18th century it was the policy of the Party whom hon. Gentleman opposite represented to exploit the colonial taxpayer at the interest of the capitalist party of that time, and that policy lost us the American colonies. The policy of the same Party to-day appeared to be to exploit the home taxpayer in the name of the Colonies when they happened to be largely bound up with the capitalist interests. He was well assured that the people of this nation would not long endure such a policy, and if there was any straining of the relations between these Colonies and the mother country the guilt would lie on right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Seeing that the Government had given way and the Natal Government would have been led to believe that they might take any course which seemed good in their eyes in regard to the treatment of the natives, would his Majesty's Government now recall his Majesty's troops from Natal? He desired to protest against the taxpayers being expected to bear in perpetuity the burdens of military intervention forced upon them by the impolicy of one or two colonial Governments, without our Government, the representative of His Majesty, being allowed the slightest power of intervention or control in the name of the Empire.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said he had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Tyneside with astonishment, pain, and indignation. The hon. Member had stated, in the first place, that the difficulties which had arisen in Natal were due to the imposition of the poll tax. If hon. Members would refer to the Native Commissioner's Report for the year 1904, the last Report issued, they would see that the hut tax had been promptly and willingly paid.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: It is the poll tax which is now in question, and not the hut tax.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER said that those who knew the history of recent events knew that the Ethiopian movement had been the foundation of the agitation. The hon. Member for Tyneside had quoted from a paper called the *Prince.* He was surprised at an hon. Member who professed to know Natal quoting from a paper which was the most disreputable paper in South Africa. Did the hon. Member not know that the editor of that paper was tried before a magistrate in Durban for making infamous statements about lady school teachers in Durban?

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I am quite aware of it.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER said that happened while he was in South Africa, a year and three months ago. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] He would repeat his statement that the charge made against that editor was made while he was on a visit to South Africa when he was conversant with all the circumstances of the case. [Renewed MINISTERIAL laughter.] He did not see why there should be laughter from hon. Gentlemen opposite, from below the Gangway, and even from the Treasury Bench opposite in reference to circumstances with which the whole of South Africa was familiar, namely, the trial of this editor for infamous statements made against the moral character of respectable school teachers in Durban. If he was not mistaken the editor was either imprisoned or fined for making those statements.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: The hon. Member does not seem to understand that I was not quoting an editorial, but the winner of the cake competition.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER said the hon. Member quoted from that paper, which he said represented the views of hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House, and he had admitted that he knew the facts he had stated in regard to this editor having been convicted for making these infamous charges. Knowing this, the hon. Member would have this House believe that the statement he quoted from that paper was worthy of credence. And besides this, the hon. Member and those who sat beside him and below the Gangway, by laughter and ridicule chose to insinuate an innuendo against the hon. Member who was now addressing the House. [Cries of "No, no."] That was the level to which debate in this House was being reduced. (Mr. Robertson rose, but the hon. Member refused to give way.) The debate was reduced to a low level indeed, and the statements of the hon. Member were not made in good faith. [Cries of "Order," and "Withdraw."]

*Mr. MADDISON (Burnley) rose to order. Was it in order to charge an hon. Member with want of good faith?

*Mr. SPEAKER said that if the hon. Member for Gravesend meant to imply that statements were made which the hon. Member knew to be false, that would be improper, but he did not gather that was the hon. Member's intention.

*Sir GILBERT PARKER said that what he meant to convey was very simple. The hon. Member had confessed that he knew the circumstances connected with the publication of this paper; that he knew the editor of it was discredited throughout South Africa; that in Natal the editor of that paper and the paper itself were execrated from one end of the Colony to the other; and he said that to quote that paper in this House was not to his mind an example of good faith. ["Question."] When the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division argued that the Natal Government were not responsible, he was trying to throw discredit on the Governor. ["No, no."]

Major SEELY rose to order.

*Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. and gallant Member could explain at the end of the hon. Member's speech.

*Sir GILBERT PARKER said the hon. Member's words were, "The civil Government ceases to have responsibility." Therefore he wished to throw the whole of the responsibility and the whole of the censure upon the Governor. What were the facts? It was within the knowledge of every one who knew constitutional procedure in the Colonies. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool had quoted from the instructions given in 1867 by Lord Carnarvon, but there had been instructions given since then. Most serious cases relating to the prerogative of a Governor and of ministries in the Colonies had arisen since that date. Cases had arisen in Australia and New South Wales. There was the case of Sir Hercules Robinson, and the case of Gardner the bushranger. In Queensland there was the case of Sir Richard Musgrove who refused a pardon on the advice of the Home Secretary. These were two very important cases, because they tended to change the whole relationship of the Governor to the Executive Council or Cabinet throughout the Colonies. He would call to witness the hon. Member for Longford in his exposition of this fact. Sir Hercules Robinson pardoned the bushranger and was censured by the New South Wales Parliament. Sir Henry Parkes accepted responsibility and resigned, and subsequently the matter was referred to the Home Government. The Home Government referred to the Canadian Government and asked what view they would take in such a circumstance. The hon. Member for Longford was called in to offer his opinion regarding the prerogative of the Governor in Canada in relation to the Cabinet or Executive of the Dominion. The hon. Member gave it as his opinion that the prerogative should be administered precisely as in England, pursuant to the advice of the Dominion Ministers. Then in 1877 new instructions were issued to Lord Lorne, the then Governor.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: In reference to Canada alone.

*Sir GILBERT PARKER said the instructions were in these terms—

> "In all cases of a merely local nature the advice of the Canadian Ministers in respect to the exercise of the prerogative of pardon shall not only be taken but shall prevail."

Since then the instructions issued not only to Canada, but to the Australian Governors, had been upon exactly that basis. It was the practice in relation to the prerogative of pardon and the approval of sentences that the Governor in every Colony should act in concert with and by the advice of his Ministers, and not independently of them.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: No.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER said it was so. Every constitutional authority regarded it as an elementary constitutional doctrine that a self-governing Colony should have freedom of action in dealing with offences against its own laws, and the offences of these natives were offences against the criminal law of Natal. The hon. Member below the gangway would have the House believe that because a criminal offence was committed before martial law was proclaimed, therefore martial law should not have retrospective action. But did not the House recognise that martial law was the absolute and immediate consequence of this offence against lawful authority? The crime was committed on the 8th and martial law was proclaimed on the 9th. It was the only law prevalent in the Colony then. It was the law which overrode every other law. It had superior force over every other law in the country for the time being. That being so, martial law was proclaimed, not in view of this particular case, but in view of a rising of the natives throughout the Colony. The natives in this particular case naturally came under the authority of the court-martial, and were fairly tried. [AN HON MEMBER: How do you know?] Why, the Treasury Bench admitted that they were fairly tried, but they only admitted it after a second cablegram from the Governor of the Colony. The first cablegram stated clearly and definitely that the natives had been regularly tried with everything in order, that the guilt of the accused was proved, and that the Governor had approved of the sentences. Mark what followed. The Government intervened. It asked for more information, and here a constitutional point was involved. The Governor in council with his Ministers, according to the precedent followed throughout the Colonies, having reviewed the whole of the evidence, came to the conclusion that the sentence should be carried out. The Governor as the representative of and acting for the Crown gave his decision. He then simply reported the circumstance to the Home Government that the natives had been duly tried and found guilty. The Government had called upon the Governor to reverse the decision at which he had arrived in a constitutional way in concert with his Ministers. [Cries of "No."] The Chancellor of the Exchequer shook his head, but he approved of the sentence that these men should be shot upon a certain day. The Government said to the Governor, "Reverse your decision regarding the shooting of these men to-morrow"—[Cries of "No"]—"and leave it to us to say whether you are justified." [Cries of "No."]. He pressed his point, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer shook his head and said "No." Suppose the information received from Natal had not satisfied the Colonial Secretary and the law officers of the Crown, what action would the Government have taken? Would there have been any reversal of the decision? Right hon. Gentlemen opposite knew perfectly well that there were only two grounds on which the decision could be reversed. One was irregularity of procedure and the other was a failure to follow the course of natural justice. Underneath the speeches of the hon. Members below the gangway and opposite there lay the suggestion that the military officers who were concerned in the putting down of this incipient rebellion, from lack of legal knowledge, were not fitted to judge of evidence given by witnesses of a crime committed in presence of a great many people. If the hon. Gentleman opposite had been sitting on that court-martial he would probably have repudiated most strongly the suggestion that he was not fitted to pass judgment in the case of men who were proved to have committed the crime. But there was another fact. There was nothing that lawyers were more apt to do when the opportunity occurred than to carry their case to a higher court. If there had been a weak spot in the evidence, if there had been one loophole, one avenue for carrying the case further, would not the lawyer attending the case have carried it further? The only way in which this judgment could be interfered with would naturally be through the legal representatives of these natives. The legal representatives of the natives made no protest whatever on either ground; this Government alone took action, with the result that a crisis occurred for which the Colonial Governor was blamed. He would not say that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies repudiated all responsibility, but he ventured to prophesy to-night that the hon. Gentleman, placed in a difficult position, would resort to his usual method of spreading a layer of eloquence and rhetoric over the plain Anglo-Saxon fact [Cries of "No."] Yes, he would try to escape down the area. He would not face the simple fact that the colony which had lately been troubled by the action of this Government had had reason to object strenuously to the action taken by the hon. Gentleman and his colleagues, for he could not suppose that the Colonial Secretary himself had acted without the fullest concurrence and advice of those who sat beside him. He had tried to present two or three points which he believed hon. Gentlemen opposite would have difficulty in answering. The charge made against the colony of Natal of not having behind it the spirit of British institutions, of not having behind it that character which could judge justly of its own affairs, was a charge which would be repudiated, which had been repudiated, not only by Natal itself, but by other self-governing colonies. Canada and Australia, as well as the whole of South Africa, were absolutely set in their judgment that the action taken by the Government was wholly unjustified, and was only the result of a series of attempts to assert the dignity of people lately come into office and who had not yet learned to act differently towards the Colonies from their predecessors in Liberal Ministries. The Colonies remembered D'Urban and the results of his policy—a policy which drove the Boers from the South to the North; they remembered Sir Bartle Frere, Gordon, and Milner. [Ironical Cheers.] He knew there would be derisive cheers at the mention of that name. The Colonies also remembered Lord Durham, a distinguished Liberal who was sent to Canada when there was trouble there in 1837. They had heard from the Liberal Benches unlimited praise of the Report of Lord Durham upon Canada, and they had been told that he was one of the greatest Liberal reformers, and one of the greatest constitutional governors and administrators that this Empire had ever known. But was it not the case that the Liberal Government repudiated Lord Durham while he was still writing that Report which had made his name immortal in the Colonies? Was it not the case that in Parliament Lord Melbourne threw over that great administrator, and was it not a Liberal Government which sent him to his grave humiliated and for the moment dishonoured? He would commend to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite the following words which Lord Rosebery used last November—

> "I have not scrupled to say in public this very year that I think the Liberal Party might do more to win the confidence of the outer Britons of this Empire than it has done, and I hope it will apply itself when it again resumes power with earnestness to that particular branch of its duties."

He said a fortnight ago that he hoped the present Government would win its way to the confidence of the Colonies, and to-night he commended Lord Rosebery's words to them, for their action during the past week had not tended to reassure the people of this country who believed in the Colonies and the Empire.

MAJOR SEELY said he wished to make an explanation with regard to the statement which had been made that he desired to throw the whole censure and blame on Sir Henry McCallum. He had twice asserted that the whole responsibility rested on the House of Commons, and had commended Sir Henry McCallum for his action.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said the hon. Member had accused him of having taken part in laughter which had been interpreted as conveying some innuendo. He took no part whatever in the laughter, and at this moment he did not know what innuendo was meant.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The hon. Gentleman who moved the Adjournment was interrupted at one period of his speech by angry cries from above the gangway on the Opposition side, but I think those who listened to that speech will readily agree that it was a speech couched in terms of careful moderation and especially aimed at advancing the strong humanitarian views with which the hon.

Gentleman has associated himself without causing offence to the susceptibilities of the Colonies at the present time. Among the speeches which followed was one from my hon. friend the Member for Stratford-upon-Avon. I listened to the maiden speech of a young Member with interest, and looked back to the time when I went through a similar experience, having from about the same place thought it my duty to deliver a speech which was certainly against the main current of opinion in the Party with which I hoped to work. I hope the hon. Gentleman will intervene on future occasions in our debates, and I hope he will make speeches equally successful and more in harmony with the Party to which he belongs. Certain I am of this, that whenever he addresses the House, whatever may be the line which his conscience may prompt him to take, he will be received with tolerance and courtesy by the Liberal Party, which, at any rate, will show that it cherishes free speech and open discussion. His Majesty's Government cannot complain that this subject has been debated to-night. I do not agree with my hon. friend that this is one of those questions which the House ought not to discuss. I think these great questions are questions which demand the vigilant attention of the House of Commons, and I believe it was suggested by the practice of hon. Gentlemen opposite that if we had been wise and prudent we should have arranged that a blocking notice should be placed on the Paper to prevent this debate from taking place. [Cries of "Who said that?"] It would suggest itself readily to any one who remembered the methods over which the right hon. Gentleman himself presided when he was the Chief Whip of the Tory Party.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerset, Wellington): I take the strongest exception to that statement. I never put down a blocking Motion myself, and I never drafted one. I have never, I freely admit, attempted to interfere with the undoubted right of private Members.

*MR. CHURCHILL: For an honest man the right hon. Gentleman is singularly modest in regard to a very important branch of his handiwork. What has been the policy of the Government throughout this trouble in Natal? Our policy throughout has been to trust and support the Government of Natal. In the first speech I made on this subject in the House I endeavoured, with certain limiting sentences, generally to defend the policy of the Government of Natal in regard to the native population. I have given Answers to Questions in this House time after time asserting the fact that the conduct of these operations, and the measures for the preservation of order, must rest within the competency of the Natal Government. On March 5th I said, in reference to these very natives who have been tried—

> "His Majesty's Government do not consider they could properly interfere with the responsibility of the Colonial Government in this matter. There is no reason to anticipate that these natives will not receive a proper trial."

I am quite aware that those Answers given on behalf of the Government caused disappointment and vexation to many of the best supporters of the Government. I am ready to admit that during the native unrest in Natal we more than once felt grave misgivings as to what our duty should be and in what direction we might properly exert ourselves to safeguard the interests of the vast native population. No Party in this House has shown more confidence and more tolerance in dealing with this matter than the Party in whose name this Motion was moved, and they have shown an appreciation of the delicacy and complexity of colonial questions in their speeches. Although I do not pretend that the course that has been taken has been a popular one, at any rate we have maintained a steady policy—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."]—of trusting and supporting the Government of Natal, and of not infringing upon these enormous liberties and responsibilities which were perhaps too light-heartedly confided to a small white community — [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh."]—and we have endeavoured to the best of our ability—[AN HON. MEMBER on the LABOUR Benches: Make it a Crown Colony]—to the very best of our ability to give aid, and succour, and support to the Government and people of Natal in the period of trial and crisis from which I hope they have now at last successfully emerged. Now, of all that has passed in Natal, our Governor, Sir Henry McCallum, has kept us informed from day to day. Sir Henry McCallum has sent us full Reports of all the military operations in the field, of all the sweeping up of cattle, of the imposition of fines, of the punishment of important native chiefs—all that we have had regular and full information about. But he did not send us, he did not think it necessary to send us, similarly full and regular information about the serious constitutional discussion which he had been at the same time conducting with his own responsible Ministers. That was an unfortunate omission. I do not blame Sir Henry McCallum for that omission at all; he could not foresee what would be the position of the Secretary of State when he was confronted abruptly with the telegram announcing the imminent execution of twelve men, still less could he foresee the extraordinary action which his own Government would take when a request was put forward by this country for information and inquiry into the circumstances. But, nevertheless, had we known from day to day of the discussion which was proceeding between Sir Henry McCallum and his Ministers—had we known, for instance, on March 16th that he himself had asked those Ministers whether they would not have recourse to the Civil Courts for the trial of these prisoners, instead of trying them under martial law, and all the reasons given for and against that course, and the strong feeling entertained by those Ministers—I do not say we should have entertained a different opinion, but I do say we should never have reached the position we did abruptly reach on March 28th, when we received the telegram announcing the impending execution of these men. In the telegram, which has been published, Lord Elgin has used the expression "regret" in conjunction with this lapse on the part of Sir Henry McCallum to supply information; that expression "regret" is not intended in any sense to be an imposition of censure on Sir Henry McCallum, it is merely an observation upon an unfortunate conjunction of events. [Loud OPPOSITION laughter.] When I see that scornful attitude, those laughs, which seem to suggest, as I observe the newspapers of that Party are always ready to suggest, that Lord Elgin had desired to cast some part of the responsibility which belonged to him in colonial matters upon a subordinate—[OPPOSITION cheers]—that he has tried to shift some portion of the blame that is so unjustly attributed to him upon a subordinate—I say, using language of definite precision and without the smallest approach of exaggeration, that Lord Elgin is the very last man in the world to endeavour to rid himself of any blame, however unjustly it might be laid upon him, and to transfer that to the shoulders of a subordinate. I may add that Sir Henry McCallum himself is fully aware of the fact that he has not been censured. I come then to the circumstances under which the telegram of March 28 was sent. On that day we received a message announcing the impending execution of these twelve men. We had been led to believe that the crisis was past, we were looking forward to the speedy abandonment of this system of martial law which had caused us so much anxiety, and then suddenly we received information of an execution which I venture to say would have startled if it did not disgust any man of humanity and moderation. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member for Gravesend said we reversed the decision of the Governor of Natal and the Ministry; nothing of the sort. We expressed no opinion whatever as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoners, none as to the propriety or impropriety of the procedure by which they had been tried—we asked for information, and we asked for the necessary suspension of an irrevocable sentence in order that that information might be procured. Can anyone say that was an improper thing to do? Will anyone stand up in the House and say so? [An HON. MEMBER on the Labour Benches: "Parker."] Why, no Colonial Secretary for fifty years, confronted by such a telegram, under such circumstances, could have acted otherwise. I am not going to attempt to plunge into the mazes of a constitutional argument as to the relation of the Mother country and the Colonies to-night; that is a matter which I agree is pertinent to the present discussion, but it must be carefully and searchingly examined through the medium, I think, of cool and calm despatches, written at a period when passions are not heated, and when the emergency has passed away, and it is much fitter to be discussed in that medium than in the ordinary argument of Parliamentary debate. But I cannot accept on behalf of the Government for one moment the doctrine that we have absolutely no responsibility, no reason to ask to be consulted in regard to the events which have happened and are passing in Natal. Why, under martial law we are responsible in a peculiar way. The power of the Governor, who is our agent and officer, nominated by us, is enormously enhanced—to an indefinite extent by the imposition of martial law. Suppose these twelve men, instead of being Zulus, had been foreigners, and suppose the foreign Government of which they were subjects had objected to the procedure under which they were tried, a procedure which has the sanction, not of ordinary court law, but of court-martial law, which is no law at all. In such a case, where would the foreign Government have brought their objection? Why, Sir, to the Government of this country. And if they had attempted to enforce coercion upon the Colony concerned, it is the power of this country alone that would have intervened between them and the Colony. Is it not absurd, under these circumstances, to say that we have no right or reason to follow with the closest attention, to receive the fullest information, and avail ourselves of every opportunity of tendering friendly advice, in regard of matters in any Colony in which the ordinary law is suspended? But there is another point. Mark that I am not now touching on the constitutional aspect of the question. Our troops have been moved into the Colony for the purpose of suppressing the state of disorder which has arisen there. Natal has always been very anxious to have Imperial troops quartered within it. I think that it is a very legitimate and natural desire on their part. But the late Government came to the conclusion that no Imperial troops should be stationed there, first, for strategical reasons, secondly, on the political grounds that is not customary to quarter Imperial troops in a responsible self-governing Colony, and thirdly, because they wished the Colony to undertake the business of their own defence. Practically all the troops had been therefore withdrawn. I think there remains but one garrison regiment which we owe to the genius of Mr. Brodrick, and which is now vanishing and slowly petering out into the nothingness from which it should never have emerged. The Colony was thus denuded of Imperial troops by the late Government, and that despite the repeated and passionate protests of the colonists. As soon as the troops were gone unrest broke out among the natives. I do not say it was the cause; but the one thing followed close on the other; and as soon as the unrest broke out and the inspector and his comrade met their deaths, the first thing, or almost the first thing, done by the Governor on the advice of his Ministers, was to telegraph for Imperial troops. The telegram stated that his—

> "Ministers considered that the moral effect on the native community which would be produced at the present time by the arrival of Imperial troops would be incalculable. They did not anticipate that the Imperial troops would be required for active service, but they would be obliged if a battalion of Imperial troops at least were sent."

That was on February 11th. On that we directed one of the finest regiments in the service, the 2nd Cameron Highlanders, should be despatched from Pretoria to Petermaritzburg; and they gave "incalculable assistance" to the Colonial Government in meeting and surmounting the difficulties with which they were confronted. Indeed, nothing could more clearly prove the manner in which Imperial interests are involved in what has taken place in Natal. What is the population of the Colony? There are 100,000 whites, and 900,000 natives, Zulus, and Kaffirs. If these 900,000 natives were to rise against the 100,000 whites, it is to the Imperial Government, the Imperial Exchequer, and the armed forces of this country that the Colony would be forced to look for their defence; and I say that when our responsibility is so closely involved, when our assistance is so fully availed of, and so freely and generously given, it is impossible for us to refuse to take notice of things that may be done there under martial law, or to remain indifferent to the welfare of that vast native population for whose suppression our troops are directly or indirectly being employed. That is the justification I submit to the House for the telegram which we sent in reference to the executions; and I have not the smallest doubt that in common sense, in reason, and in constitutional law that action can be absolutely vindicated. We sent the telegram on March 28th. Next day the full information for which we asked arrived. We found the prisoners had been tried under martial law. Martial law is no law at all. Martial law is brute force. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] It is ignorance alone that makes those interruptions. The only restriction on martial law is that no more force is used than necessary, and where more force is used than necessary persons may afterwards be called to account unless covered by an Act of Indemnity. The hon. Member for Leicester suggested it was illegal to try these men by martial law for an offence committed before martial law was proclaimed. Of course all martial law is illegal, and an attempt to introduce illegalities into martial law which is not military law, is like attempting to add salt water to the sea. But although this trial took place under martial law, I believe we have every reason to believe, from the information now obtained, that it had a very close resemblance to a legal and judicial proceeding and was in fact a fair trial. It was a proceeding which lasted seven or eight days. The Attorney-General was consulted upon the propriety of the procedure adopted; counsel were allowed to the prisoners, and twelve white witnesses and twenty-one native witnesses were called on different sides. The Governor informs us that every individual case was gone into in review by himself personally, and that a special précis of every case was prepared and submitted to and discussed by him with the Council of Ministers.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: Were the prisoners tried in open Court?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I do not know whether the Court was open or not, but I have no reason to suppose that any unusual secrecy was practised. I am sorry to say that public opinion there is, however, in favour of even more rigorous measures than were adopted. But I attach the greatest importance to the fact that the Governor investigated the individual guilt of each man. That shows that these executions—the echo of which has jarred in all our ears—[Cries from the CONSERVATIVE Benches of "No"]—in almost all our ears to-day, all who have ears to hear—were not a gathering together of a number of people to make an example; they were an attempt by a rough, but not unfair, procedure to punish persons for close complicity with an act of homicide. [Cries from the OPPOSITION Benches of "Murder."] It may be objected that it is a very strong order to kill fourteen persons for the murder of two. I quite agree, but so far as the verdict is concerned the fact that so many persons were implicated is not to my mind an absurdity. Do not let us forget that the bodies of the two white men are before us. The body of Inspector Hunt was pierced by innumerable assegais and every one of the natives concerned had actually blooded his assegai in the body of the murdered inspector. Although I deplore that it was thought necessary by the Ministry of Natal to execute so many persons, still I do not feel that if the methods by which their guilt has been established have been correct in their character the mere fact that mercy was not to be extended was in itself strong enough to justify us in endeavouring further to stay the execution of the sentence. Therefore, so soon as we heard the details, which we did on Friday night and as soon as it had been considered by the Cabinet, we telegraphed to the Governor that he must settle the matter locally with his responsible Ministers. Those Ministers were not inclined to recede from the position they had taken up, and the executions were carried out to-day. That is the whole story so far as the home Government is concerned. Our course has been correct, consistent, and indeed inevitable. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] I have heard people use the vulgar schoolboy expression that we have "climbed down." [OPPOSTION cries of "Hear, hear" and laughter.] It finds great favour there [pointing to the Opposition Benches]. Let us not be provoked by the use of this sort of language into any action which is not wise, sensible, and reasonable according to our convictions and our principles. If a prisoner sends his case to a Court of Appeal and the Court of Appeal orders a stay of execution pending consideration, and, after consideration, decides that the original sentence should be confirmed, that is not usually described as a climb down on the part of the Judges. It is only the inevitable working of a correct judicial and legal procedure. Our policy has not been altered by the resignation of the Government of Natal. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] That incident is a detached, fortuitous, untoward, utterly unexpected incident; but it has not altered the course of Government policy. [Renewed OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] If the Government of Natal had not resigned, but at the same time had remained of the opinion that the execution must take place, we should not have prevented them from deciding the matter at their own discretion when we were satisfied that upon the whole the regular forms of justice had been observed; and if they had resigned ten times over, or were again to resign ten times over, we should not be deterred from possessing ourselves beforehand of all that information on these grave matters which we are bound to possess if we are to do our duty by the House of Commons, and if we are to do our duty by the native races, who are, after all, British subjects, who, after all, look to the Throne for protection, and to whose well-being, while they are under the national flag, no one who regards the honour, and indeed the safety, of his country can be indifferent. I admit that the resignation of the Natal Government had been unexpected by His Majesty's Ministers. I think the least said about that the soonest mended. I do not wish to say anything which would cause anger and ill-feeling where there is anger and ill-feeling enough; but I must say this, that that resignation was not altogether free from some flavour of precipitancy. I must say that so vehement an assertion of independence on the part of a colony was not altogether compatible and consistent with passionate appeals for the support of British troops and eager acceptance of that support. If an evil effect has been produced on the native mind by this exposure the responsibility for any evil consequences that may have resulted does not rest with His Majesty's Government, who throughout the business have laboured to support and maintain the Government of Natal in spite of many misgivings and of many divergencies from the course they have pursued. It rests with those who, without sufficient reason, I think it will be admitted on reflection, have taken a step which, if every colony were to take it, would bring a deadlock into every branch of our Imperial administration. Now, I have said all I have to say on that aspect; but I have one word to say to hon. Gentlemen opposite before I sit down. The House will notice their jubilation. One would have thought there had been some great occasion of public rejoicing. One would have thought that the resignation of a Colonial Ministry and the execution of a dozen native subjects of the King was an occasion of rejoicing. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] Is it not quite evident to those who have followed the proceedings in this House on the question, not only to-night, but the other night, is it not quite evident to those who were here at Question time and heard the Questions addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury, that hon. Gentlemen opposite are anxious to make party capital out of this? Beaten hopelessly in the British constituencies, they are anxious to transfer the battle to the colonies of the Empire. The Conservative Party has become a small minority in this House. It is powerless to affect the course of domestic legislation; but on colonial matters it still possesses great influence and power in virtue of the sympathy which exists between the Imperialists and the protectionists who sit opposite and certain classes, but certain classes only, in the colonies of the Empire. It also possesses great power from the fact that it uses from day to day a world-wide newspaper Press which is characterised by the most unscrupulous malignity. I admit that, weak and powerless and broken as that Party is, it still retains the power of poisoning the hearts of the colonists against us. But if injury has resulted, those who sit there —[pointing to the Opposition Benches amid OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] —are not wholly free from responsibility. Let hon. Members clear their minds of a delusion. We cannot prevent them from pursuing whatever tactics they choose; but I do not think that their tactics will accelerate their return to power and win back for them the affections of an estranged democracy. Neither will they have the smallest effect on the strength and the stability of the Party that supports the Government. I think that the Government will become stronger the more it is forced to rely upon purely democratic support; but although the Party opposite will not get into office by the exertions they are making — although they will not succeed in regaining their vanished popularity—it is yet in their power to do a grievous injury to the cause they profess to have at heart, and in the course of the next two or three years to produce antagonisms which will shake to its very foundations the whole structure of our colonial system. I have now offered an explanation for the course that the Government has followed, and I trust the hon. Member who moved the adjournment in a speech full of appreciation of the complexity of the problem will feel that he is entitled not to press the Motion to a division. I ask also that the House should now be permitted without further interruption of business to come to the Orders of the day.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said the hon. Gentleman had wound up his speech by giving the Party to which he had the honour to belong a lecture, telling them that they were endeavouring to make party capital out of this question, and that he did not think those tactics would be successful. The Unionist Party did not want advice from the other side of the House upon this question, and if they wanted it they were not likely to go for it to the hon. Gentleman. As to the statement that they had endeavoured to make Party capital out of the question, so far the main outcry and the main attack upon the Government had not come from Party politicians in this country, but had been found in the telegrams to the newspapers, from the Colony of Natal and our other great Colonies. It was a gross misrepresentation of the fact to endeavour to turn that statement into an attempt to make Party capital. The hon. Gentleman had expressed the hope that the House might be allowed to pass immediately to the day's business, and that the hon. Member for Leicester would withdraw his Amendment. The hon. Member, when he moved his Amendment, indicated that he was not very anxious to go to a division, and expressed a fear lest his pacific intentions towards the Government might be interfered with by some wicked action on the part of some Gentleman sitting above the gangway. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that, so far as the Motion which he had put before the House was concerned, it would find no support in that part of the House. He desired to disclaim any desire on the part of the Unionist Party to make political capital out of this matter; there was not the slightest foundation for the charge. He claimed that the Unionist Party was as anxious as any one to see justice done, and there was no foundation for the allegation that a different view would have been taken of the circumstances had the unfortunate natives been white men instead of black men. There was not a shadow of foundation for the assertion, and everybody in this House was, he believed, agreed that the death, not of twelve, but of one man was a matter which involved very anxious consideration. Hon. Members, however, seemed to ignore the fact that Natal had been passing through a time of grave difficulty, when a small minority of the population realised that at any moment there might be outbreaks leading to a very critical situation. He had listened to the speech of the Under-Secretary with satisfaction, because he not only explained the reason which justified His Majesty's Government in asking for this information, but exonerated the Governor of the Colony from any blame for the line he had taken. He could not help thinking that the hon. Gentleman's exoneration of the Governor and of the Colony had not come a moment too soon, and, being made in that House, would have a peaceful effect outside. He understood the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary to say that self-government had been granted too lightly to the Government of Natal. He thought that that was the phrase which the hon. Gentleman used.

*MR. CHURCHILL assented that substantially that was what he had said.

MR. WALTER LONG said he regretted that the hon. Gentleman had used language of that description. They could not to be too careful in this Parliament and this country of the terms they used in referring to the self-governing colonies, because the smallest suggestion that they were not to be trusted was bound to lead to dissatisfaction on their part and mistrust of the mother country. It led the colonies to doubt whether the mother country understood their difficulties and the burdens resting upon them. He was glad to be assured that the Government did not interfere lightheartedly, and the explanations given, he admitted, materially altered the aspect of the case. Still he asked with wonder, Was this kind of interference to be adopted towards all the self-governing colonies, to Canada and Australia, and, if so, how was it going to be enforced? So far as the Opposition were concerned, they had heard the explanation of the Under-Secretary with satisfaction; they had heard the exoneration of the Governor with even more satisfaction; and he could assure the hon. Member that he need have no anxiety, if he did not press his Motion to a division, that they would take advantage of a Resolution, with the terms of which they did not agree, to vote on an issue which should not, in their judgment, be presented to the House.

Mr. J. R. MACDONALD said that in view of all the circumstances he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion. [Loud cries of "No."]

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth) as a colonist regretted the tone which had been adopted this evening upon a subject of the most momentous importance. It had been a sad evening for him to have to listen to the scoffing and sneering remarks that had been made with respect to the colonies and to extracts which had been read from rags of papers in reference to honest men of whom he was proud. They had heard of the small number of white men in Natal; but the fact that they were so small in number made him all the more proud of them. The men of the Garden Colony, as Natal was called, had governed that colony as well as, if not better than, any other colony in the British Empire had been governed. They were men of whom Englishmen were proud and of whom they would be prouder in the future. When the English took over the colony of Natal there were 46,000 natives in that colony. After thirty or forty years of their government the native population reached 900,000. Was not that a proof that the natives themselves believed that the Colony was well governed and that they enjoyed rights and privileges which they did not get elsewhere? The increase of the population was due not only to the increase of the natives settled there, but also to the influx from neighbouring countries of natives who knew that they could find there security for the lives of themselves, their wives, and their families, and for their property. This fact, he thought, showed that the Government of Natal was an efficient one. The white population of Natal, being in a minority, could not maintain their position or the efficiency of their Government unless they kept their word. If when they had said a thing they were interfered with, and could not carry it out, then those who interfered with them were playing with fire. If it once got into the native mind that what the white population said should be done need not be done, it was impossible to say what the consequences would be. The small number of whites had done their duty very well, and the fact that when the rebellion began some of them gathered their wives and children together in a laager showed that they thought there was danger. The natives consisted of warlike tribes who twenty, thirty, or forty years ago were at war with each other. The Government had been put in a humiliating position. They had interfered with a small colony, but they did not try it elsewhere. There were native races in Canada, and there were the Maories in New Zealand; but the Government did not attempt to interfere with those colonies. But the people of Natal were formed of the same stuff as the men who lived in those colonies, and that was a point that the Government did not seem to have reckoned with. It was owing to that fact that they had met with this humiliation. It was a matter of the deepest regret to him that questions of this kind should be discussed in this House, as it was not desirable that they should be debated here. Colonial men could appreciate the difficulty of their fellows, but many Members of the House had no information upon which they could form an opinion in regard to them. The colonial man was a practical man and knew that the moment there was a rebellion on the part of the natives it must be stamped out by strong measures, and the kindest Government was that which stamped it out most quickly.

And, it being midnight, the Motion for Adjournment lapsed without Question put.

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IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.

Return ordered, "relative to the Irish Land Purchase Fund created by Section

27 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, and the applications for advances and other claims thereon up to the 31st day of January, 1906.”

I. The Irish Land Purchase Fund at the 31st day of January, 1906.

	Nominal Amount.	Amount in Cash.
	£	£
Sums placed to credit of the Capital Account of the Irish Land Purchase Fund :—		
(1) Guaranteed 2¾ per cent. Stock - - - - -		
(2) Sinking Fund, invested in further advances -		
£		
Deduct amount assigned to Capital Account of the Irish Land Purchase Aid Fund, for percentage payable under Section 47 - - - -		
Net Total available for advances - - - - £		

II.—Sums Advanced and Sums Allocated or Distributed up to the 31st day of January, 1906.

	Lodged in Bank or otherwise Advanced.	Allocated or Distributed, including moneys transferred by the Land Commission to the Land Judge's Court.
	£	£
Irish Land Commission.		
Direct sales.—Landlord and tenant - -		which includes £ transferred to Land Judge's Court.
Direct sales.—Land Judge's Court - -		
Section 40, Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896		
Congested District Board, Sections 72 and 77, Irish Land Act, 1903 - -		
Estates Commissioners.		
Direct sales of estates to tenants - -		
Purchase of estates, Section 6, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - -		
Purchase of estates, Section 7, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - - - -		
Purchase of untenanted land, Section 8, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - -		
Congested Districts Board. Section 79, Irish Land Act, 1903 - - - -		
Totals - - £		

III. Applications for Advances in Direct Sales of Estates to Tenants, offers accepted to sell Estates under Sections 6, 7, 8, and Section 79 of The Irish Land Act, 1903, representing definite claims on the Fund, from the commencement of the Act up to the 31st day of January, 1906, with the amount thereof, including Paid Cases.

	Amount.
	£
Irish Land Commission.	
Direct sales—Landlord and tenant	
Direct sales—Land Judge's Court	
Section 40, Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896 . . .	
Congested Districts Board, Sections 72 and 77, Irish Land Act, 1903	
Estates Commissioners.	
Direct sales of estates to tenants	
Purchase of estates, Section 6, Irish Land Act, 1903 . .	
Purchase of estates, Section 7, Irish Land Act, 1903 . .	
Purchase of untenanted land, Section 8, Irish Land Act, 1903	
Congested Districts Board, Section 79, Irish Land Act, 1903	
Total . . . . £	

—(*Viscount Castlereagh.*)

HAYES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Return ordered, "of Copy of Letter from the Local Government Board to the Hayes Urban District Council, dated the 19th day of February, 1906, relative to the application of the Council for sanction to borrow further money for works of sewerage and sewage disposal."—(*Mr. John Ward.*)

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) in moving the adjournment of the House, said it was intended by the Prime Minister to move the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule to-morrow (Tuesday) in order to conclude the debate on the Rules of Procedure. He also asked for the Ruling of the Speaker, in reference to the Amendments already agreed to, whether they would come into operation at once. It was the intention that the amended rules should not come into force until after Easter, but the proposal to that effect had not been reached.

*MR. SPEAKER: It will be impossible to put in force Standing Order No. 1 in the condition in which it now stands without dislocating all the practice of the House. For example, if the House were to meet at a quarter to three o'clock to-morrow it would only give ten minutes for Questions. I am sure that would not be the wish of any Member of this House. Therefore I think we should not put this Order as amended into force until the other Amendments have been made. I regard these Amendments as all hanging together, and it would not be possible to enforce them until they are complete. Whether the House proposes to bring them into force after Easter or at the moment they are completed is another matter. But it would be quite impossible to put Standing Order No. 1 into force in its present condition.

Adjourned at eight minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1906.

The Lord Kilmaine took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bute (English and Welsh) Estates. Petition for a Private Bill, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to two English Judges.

Standing Orders Committee. Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that the Corporation of Drogheda shall not be empowered to give such a guarantee as is provided for in Clause 4, unless the consent of a majority of the ratepayers to such guarantee be first obtained. Read, and agreed to.

Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]; National Assurance Company of Ireland and Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Knott End Railway Bill [H.L.]. Reported, without Amendment.

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Bridgwater Canals Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill; Dowlais Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners.

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navigation Company Bill [H.L.]; Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:

E. Westmorland, V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*), L. Newton (chairman), L. Faber, L. Joicey; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Bury Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]; West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cumberland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; County of Durham Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; West Cumberland Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:

E. Lauderdale (chairman), E. Cathcart, V. Ridley, L. Rossmore, L. Estcourt, agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Haslingden Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]; Hull and Barnsley Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill [H.L.]; Credition Lighting and Power Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill

[H.L.]; Portsmouth Water Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.

D. Newcastle, E. Devon, E. Latham, L. Leigh, L. Ludlow (chairman) agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 1st of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill, read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 44).

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious reaching in schools.

1. Of teachers in schools at Ardwick; Stockport; Withington; Pendleton; Heaton Norris (2); Manchester (2); Atherton; Onkenrad.

2. Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Denshaw; Manchester (7); Oldham.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS, ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3543. France (French West Africa)
No. 3544. Germany.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS (INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT).

Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents in the Department of the Inland Revenue which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1906, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNION OF BENEFICES ACTS, 1860 AND 1898.

Scheme of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for effecting an union of the Benefices of St. Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell, and of Holy Trinity, Gough Square, and for effecting certain other measures incidental to or arising out of such union.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 43.)

SUNDAY TRADING.

Ordered, That the evidence taken by the Select Committee on the Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.] during the session of 1905 be referred to the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading of the present session.

ELECTIONS (MEETINGS IN SCHOOLROOMS) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, I am sure you will be as pleased to hear as I am to inform your Lordships that I do not think it will be necessary for me to detain you at any length in explaining the provisions of this Bill, and in asking your Lordships to give it a Second Reading. This Bill is practically identical with the Bill which I ventured to present to your Lordships last session—identical in its principles and in its details; and that Bill, as your Lordships will remember, obtained a Second Reading in this House *nemine contradicente*. It had also the approval of the most rev. Primate and of several of his distinguished colleagues on the Episcopal Bench. I mention that fact because I am sure you Lordships will see in these circumstances that this Bill contains no very revolutionary principles, nor does it contain any details calculated to injure the education, either secular or religious, to which the public elementary schools are by law devoted.

The Bill, subsequently amended by your Lordships, passed through all its stages in this House. It was fortunate enough to receive a Second Reading last session in a Parliament which, as your Lordships well know, was very different in its political complexion from that which is sitting at the present day. The principle of the Bill was accepted by the Government of the day and by my noble friend opposite, Lord Londonderry, who was then President of the Board of Education. But, on the Motion to go into Committee on the Bill, the noble Marquess informed the House that, while the Government had no objection to the principle of the Bill, there were some details in the clauses to which he himself, and the Government, I presume, took some exception. I think the gist of his objections was that the Bill was badly drafted, that it had been drafted by an amateur, and he said at the time—

> "We at the Board of Education are unable to understand the noble Lord's meaning, or the meaning of the Bill."

I gathered from the noble Marquess's speech that the Bill would have been more acceptable to His Majesty's Government of that day and to the noble Marquess had it been drafted with the concurrence and assistance of those able officers of the Board of Education over which at that time the noble Marquess presided. I thought then, and I think still, that there was great force in the noble Marquess's argument, that if the Bill was really to be placed on the statute book it was very desirable that it should be drafted with expert advice, though at the same time I thought your Lordships were fully competent to remedy the various little matters of detail to which the noble Marquess at that time alluded. But, still, I think that any Bill which is to some extent to alter the law of the country had better have the advantage of expert knowledge in its drafting, and especially the advantage of perusal by the officials of the particular Department to which the Bill itself applies.

This year, therefore, I took advantage of the noble Marquess's advice, and with the consent of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Education and the assistance of my noble friend the Lord President of the Council, I was enabled, in conjunction with the experts at the Board of Education, to produce the Bill which I now venture to ask your Lordships to read a second time. I trust that, having carried out to the full the suggestion of the noble Marquess opposite on behalf of the late Government, I shall now have the assistance of the noble Marquess and his friends in placing this Bill on the statute-book of the country.

I have had on various occasions in your Lordships' House and in another place to explain what the reasons are which, in my humble judgment, make this Bill necessary, and I trust that your Lordships will excuse me if I do not go into them at any length on this occasion. But it may be that there are some noble Lords present who have not heard the story connected with this Bill, and I will therefore, very briefly, narrate to your Lordships why, in my opinion, it is necessary that this Bill should become law. The necessity for this measure arose more than twenty years ago, when I had the honour of bringing it before the House of Commons for the first time in the form of a Resolution and subsequently in the form of a Bill. It arose out of the Franchise Act of 1884. Previous to that time the electors in county divisions were to a certain extent a limited class. Many of them were farmers, and, being farmers, they possessed horses and carts, and when it was necessary for a ,Member or candidate to make a speech to his constituents or would-be constituents, the electors were able to drive into the county town and attend the meeting.

As those of your Lordships who sat for county divisions before the Act of 1884 will remember, candidates and Members very often took advantage of the farmers' "ordinary" at which to endear themselves to the electors; but with the Franchise Act of 1884 all that was changed, because there were called into being a very large number of electors—the agricultural labourers—who for the first time were given the franchise and called upon to decide on the great public questions of the day. These labourers, of course, were not in possession of horses and carts, and were not accustomed to dine at the farmers' "ordinary," and therefore they were prevented from hearing what their candidates and Members had to say unless those candidates and Members were enabled to go down into their part of the constituency and address them. Instead of having to bring the electors to the meetings, you had practically to take the meetings to the electors.

What happened? I will give your Lordships a concrete case in the constituency which I had the honour to represent in Essex. It was a constituency some forty miles in length, containing eighty-one villages. In all those villages there were agricultural labourers, before whom it was most necessary that the candidate should put the public questions of the day in pursuance of his candidature, and to whom he should explain matters which it was necessary for them to know. In my division there were at that time—and I believe the same thing obtains now—not above four or five public places which it was possible for any one to hire in order to address the electors; but in these various villages there were public elementary schools, with excellent rooms, quite large enough to hold the limited number of electors who lived in the particular village. In many cases the managers of these schools, whilst giving the use of them to members or candidates of one particular political faith, refused to permit their use by members or candidates of another.

Lord Burghclere.

I do not for a single moment bring any accusation against the managers of these schools. I bring no accusation against Conservative candidates. I have not the slightest doubt that they were as anxious that the arguments of their opponents should be heard as the members of the Party to which I belong were that their opponents should have this opportunity. But the fact remains that there was at that time, and there are at the present moment, places where the use of these schools is denied to people of one political opinion while it is given to others, and in many cases it is denied to both Parties. I would remind your Lordships of one particular instance which illustrates to the full my point, and which I had occasion to relate to your Lordships last session. There was a school in a village very similar to that to which I have been alluding. The Conservative candidate obtained that school, made his speech, and was listened to naturally by his audience. The Liberal candidate asked for the use of the school, but it was denied to him. Acting in a spirit which I am sure will be appreciated by both sides of the House, the Conservative candidate wrote to the vicar and asked that his opponent might have the use of the school as well as himself. Well, what happened? The vicar gave permission to the Liberal candidate, and then announced to the Conservative candidate that neither of them would have the use of the school in future, so that the whole result of the interference of the hon. Gentleman in question was that neither candidate was to be again allowed the use of the school. I think that ancedote will bring home to your Lordships the fact that the measure to which I am now asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading will be an advantage to both sides of politics.

I have said that I do not bring strong accusations against managers of schools for refusing their use in the case of one particular set of political candidates. I would say at once that these political zealots are in an absolute minority. They exist, as I have said, mainly in those out-of-the-way places where political feeling sometimes runs very high on one side of politics, and where it is essential that the political opinions of both sides should be laid before the agricultural labourers. Unfortunately it does happen that the chairman of the board of management of these schools is invariably the rector or vicar of the parish. What an unjust stigma does that lay on the whole of the clergy of the Church of England who, for my part, I am confident are not as a body animated by that hatred of their opponents which is shown by some of their cloth. It was for that reason, I think, that I obtained the support of the most rev. Primate and several right rev. Prelates last year.

I will in a few sentences explain exactly what this Bill will do. This Bill, if it is passed, will enable Members or candidates for Parliament or any other public body in the neighbourhood—county council, board of guardians, and such elected bodies—to have the use of rooms in public elementary schools for the purpose of holding meetings in favour of their candidature. They will have to give seven days notice of their intention to use the schools to the local education authority, but they will only be allowed the use of school-rooms on reasonable and proper occasions—on occasions that do not interfere in any way with the educational duties, either secular or religious, of the school. Safeguards are put into the Bill—owing to the action of the Board of Education there are rather more safeguards in this Bill than in the last Bill—to guard the neighbourhood from any undue expense in regard to this use of the schools. It will be necessary for those convening the meetings to pay a proper fee to cover all expenses. Should, unfortunately, a riot take place—and this does happen sometimes in political meetings—any damage which is done to the apparatus, to the furniture, or to any part of the school, must be defrayed by the person by whom or on whose behalf the meeting is convened. For my part, I should like to amend that by providing that the expenses should be defrayed by the person who was responsible for breaking up the meeting, because it is not always the person who convenes the meeting who is responsible for the riot which subsequently occurs.

Again, they will not be able to obtain these rooms if there is another suitable building in the neighbourhood which can be used for the purpose. There is nothing which prevents the managers, should they think fit, in an amicable spirit, to allow the school to be used for this purpose; but, at the same time, I have put this provision in the Bill because I wanted to make it perfectly clear to your Lordships that in this small and, as I think, equitable measure, I have only asked for the use of the schoolrooms in places where it is absolutely impossible to get any other room suitable for the purpose. There is a proviso that the managers are not to ride off with the excuse that there is a suitable room by pointing to the Nonconformist chapel, to the use of which for the holding of public meetings there is some objection, or to a room in connection with a public-house; candidates are not to be entitled to use the schoolrooms on Sundays or on holidays, nor when the rooms have been already engaged, previous to the notice given by the Member or candidate, for any particular entertainment. The same Member or candidate may not use the schoolrooms more than once in the current year, except during a period of election.

I remember that the noble Marquess took objection to the way in which the Bill was drafted last year, describing the period of election. Since then it has had the advantage of expert examination in the Board of Education, and I hope the phrasing will now commend itself to the noble Marquess. When he has eighty or ninety villages in his constituency, I do not think any candidate, however fond he may be of making speeches, will be likely to wish to speak in any of them more than once in a year; but during election time he may use the schoolrooms as often as necessary, provided he does not interfere with educational purposes, and obtains the assent of the managers. In case of any dispute arising with regard either to the damage done, the question as to there being no suitable building, and so on, we make the local education authority the court of appeal, and that authority will also be empowered to make rules and regulations from time to time with regard to the way in which this Bill shall be worked. I hope this will have the approbation, not only of the most rev. Primate, but of the noble Marquess, Lord Londonderry.

There is a safeguard put in which was not in the Bill of last year. Though it is not obligatory on the authority responsible for the management of the school, the managers, can, if they like, call upon the candidate to give a bond of security against any damage that may take place in the school owing to a riot or anything of that kind. I do not think that is a condition that will be wanted once in a thousand cases, but it was thought right to insert it so as to make the Bill as fair and equitable as possible. I venture to think that the Bill is one which will commend itself to your Lordships.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, my noble friend in the speech he has just made has alluded more than once to the fact that when a similar Bill was introduced last year I took part in the discussion and welcomed the principle of the measure. I gratefully recognise that such Amendments as I then ventured to suggest for the promotion of additional safeguards against possible misuse of the privilege here conferred have been incorporated in this Bill, and, so far as I can see, there is nothing in the Bill that I can do other than welcome. I believe that such a Bill is necessary and will prove useful in practice. The noble Lord has alluded to cases in which difficulty arose, and in many of these cases it was on the clergy that the burden lay of acting as spokesmen in making known the decision of the managers, whose decision, of course, did not necessarily represent the opinion of all the managers. I am exceedingly glad that the clergy are to be relieved from the trying and difficult position of having sometimes to be spokesmen on behalf of those whose opinions they do not necessarily share.

Lord Burghclere.

Nothing could be more desirable than that we should bring the meetings now to the electors, as many of the electors are otherwise unable to attend the meetings. We have not yet succeeded in making the average agricultural labourer a man who can very readily take in political literature and draw his conclusions from it. It is generally necessary that spoken word rather than printed word should be the means by which his political sympathies are awakened or his political allegiance retained or transferred. I want, above all other things, that we should throughout the country have our voters more and more understanding the issues on which they are called upon to vote; and if our schools, after school time is over, can be made available for that particular purpose, I feel that we shall have done good in a direct as well as in an indirect way in introducing this Bill. I hope your Lordships will give the Bill a Second Reading.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, whatever opinion may be held with regard to the merits or demerits of this Bill—and in my view there are very few demerits in it—I think all Members of your Lordships' House will congratulate my noble friend who is in charge of the Bill on the consistency and persistency with which now for nearly twenty years he has advocated this measure. I quite agree with what the noble Lord said as to the great difficulty that has been experienced since 1884 in giving to those who have been admitted to the franchise opportunities of hearing both sides of the question, and I agree with the most rev. Primate as to the necessity of the electors being given these opportunities.

My noble friend in charge of the Bill said that there had been difficulty in the past in obtaining the use of school-rooms owing to the action of voluntary school managers, and chiefly owing to the action of the chairman, who was invariably the rector or vicar of the parish. I remember that last year, in introducing the Bill, the noble Lord quoted a number of cases in which he declared it was absolutely impossible for candidates holding the views he held to obtain the use of school houses, although their use was invariably given to candidates holding the views that I myself am privileged to hold, and he seemed to think that that might be the case in the future. I should be the last person to controvert his statement, but I have never come across any such state of affairs in any of the districts with which I have been acquainted. I have always placed the buildings under my control at the disposal of both Parties. The noble Marquess who leads your Lordships' House addressed a meeting in a drill-hall belonging to me, and I am not sure that he did not there denounce the principles I hold; but I had the laugh on my side afterwards when the candidate who represented my views was returned by a large majority over the candidate on whose behalf the noble Marquess spoke. Personally I am only too glad that a building belonging to me should be placed at the disposal of my political opponents, and all I ask is that I should be given an opportunity of following a week after when I think I should be able to refute the statements they had made.

I think that my action is only typical of that of most people who have this power. I believe there is a general feeling of broad mindedness in this matter, and I cannot agree with Lord Burghclere as to the narrow-mindedness referred to obtaining to any large extent. The noble Lord stated with perfect accuracy the action I took on behalf of His Majesty's Government when he brought forward his measure last year. The principle which he advocated has always been supported by the Party to which I have the honour to belong. The noble Lord went on to express surprise at the line I had taken when the Bill was in Committee, and he seemed to think that, having given it the blessing of the Government on the Second Reading stage, I ought to have followed that up and supported the Bill in Committee. As a matter of fact, I did not think that the Bill then introduced by the noble Lord was in any sense a complete Bill. It required enormous alterations. As a result of having consulted the officials at the Board of Education, he has now corrected those mistakes. The Bill of last year required recasting, and I was not disposed, on behalf, of His Majesty's Government, to accept the responsibility of re-modelling a Bill on which we differed as to details at so late a period of the session.

The noble Lord has altered certain of the objectionable details in the Bill of last year and has practically recast it. In the Bill now before your Lordships he has avoided those difficulties to which I alluded last year. I pointed out that the area served by a public elementary school was not capable of any legal definition, and these words have now been deleted and the clause altered by giving the right to claim the school to the candidate instead of to the electors. I urged last year that there should be safeguards over the rights of those who ordinarily made use of the school, and I am glad to see that these have been secured by a provision that the time set apart for religious teaching, or for any previously arranged meeting or entertainment, shall not be interfered with. That was one of the chief points on which I laid stress last year. In the Bill of last year my noble friend arranged for secular teaching not to be interfered with, but he made no such provision in regard to religious teaching. I am glad to see that there has been an alteration in the Bill in this respect, and I withdraw the objection I took at that time.

I also thought that the Board of Education was placed in a somewhat invidious position in being made arbiter in disputes arising with regard to the taking of school buildings, and I am glad to see that my noble friend has made the alteration I suggested and inserted a provision that these disputes are to be dealt with by the local education authority. While we on this side of the House will give our cordial support to the Second Reading of this Bill, we shall put forward a few criticisms when the measure goes into Committee, but they will not be put forward in any hostile spirit. I think the measure is one which will be of great use, and I am glad to be able to say that we shall give it our fullest support in its present form

I will just indicate one or two points that I shall raise in Committee. In the clause relating to expenses there occur the words " a fixed charge may be made." I do not know how to reconcile the words "'fixed charge" with what appears in Clause 4, in which it is laid down that—

> "The Local Education Authority may make regulations for carrying this Act into effect, and shall by those regulations make provision as to the charges to be made under that Act."

I do not quite see how charges are to be fixed and yet to be at the disposal of the local education authority. It seems to me that the word "fixed" is a little out of place. Then I would like to ask why the title of the Bill has been altered. The Bill of last year was intituled The Public Meetings (Facilities) Bill. Now it is called Elections (Meetings in Schoolrooms) Bill. I do not gather from the Bill that the meetings are to be confined to election meetings. Therefore, I would ask why the title of the Bill, the principle being the same, has been altered. Perhaps the noble Lord will consider these trifling details between now and the next stage of the Bill.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, my noble friend who introduced this Bill expressed so clearly what its purpose is, and stated its history with equal lucidity, that I really have very little more to do than to congratulate him upon the reception which it has had from all parts of the House. My noble friend explained how he came to amend the Bill in some degree from the form in which it has been previously presented to your Lordships' House. He was good enough to come to the Board of Education, and to a certain extent remodel the Bill in accordance with the suggestions which were there made to him; and I think your Lordships will agree that the effect of those alterations has been to make it evident that if this Bill is carried, as I hope it will be, into law, there can be no interference with the educational work carried on in any school building, and equally that it will be impossible to use the provisions of this Bill for any vexatious purpose in regard to any particular school.

The noble Marquess has enumerated, I think, the three principal Amendments which met his wishes, but those Amendments, if I remember rightly, were included in the alterations made in the Committee of the whole House last year. Therefore, there would have been no difficulty in the noble Marquess accepting them on that occasion and proceeding with the Bill. The noble Marquess has underrated the necessity for a Bill of this sort. He has stated that in his experience such a case as the refusal of the use of a school on political grounds is unknown; but the noble Marquess lives in an enlightened part of the world, namely, in the north of England. If the noble Marquess really believes that there are not parts of England where refusals of this kind have been in the past fairly common, I can assure him that he is greatly mistaken.

I daresay some of your Lordships may have noticed in the newspapers only to-day an account, half ridiculous and half painful, of a lady who refused to employ a particular fishmonger because he was a Liberal, and entered into a correspondence with him. I should hope that there is no district in which a person holding such views is likely to be a school manager, but the thing, I suppose, is not impossible, and the spirit which dictated the one act would undoubtedly be likely to dictate the other. I do not know whether I need say anything about the proposed Amendments which the noble Marquess opposite announced his intention of introducing. They are more a matter for my noble friend, but I would say that the phrase "fixed charge," which he seems to think an unfortunate one, in Clause 3, if read in connection with Clause 4, means this, that the local authority would name a fixed charge for its own district, but the same charge need not be named by every local authority. It only remains for me to say that His Majesty's Government sincerely hope that this Bill will become law, very much or, indeed, exactly in the form in which it now stands. I am afraid I cannot, in view of the very extensive legislative bill of fare in another place, promise my noble friend that His Majesty's Government will be able to take charge of the Bill there, but I am authorised to say that if they do find it possible to give such facilities as can sometimes be given to Bills introduced by private Members, they will be very happy to do so. I once more congratulate my noble friend upon the excellent reception which his Bill has met with

On Question, Bill read 2ª.

NAVAL CADETS.

LORD SHUTTLEWORTH rose to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he was satisfied with the present age limits for entry of Naval Cadets, or whether experience had shown that any modification was called for.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, in rising to put a Question to my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty on the subject of age limits for entry of Naval Cadets, I will not detain your Lordships for more than a few minutes. The necessity of commencing at an early age the special education of those who are to be executive naval officers is admitted on all hands. The exact age limits have been proved to be a matter of real importance. I take it that the aim of the Admiralty at the present time is to get as far as possible the best finished article that our preparatory schools can produce, and in obtaining that finished article in its best form, we also obtain the most valuable material for Osborne and Dartmouth. That is a strong reason for not placing the age too young, because if you place it too young you do not get the finished article of the preparatory schools, you do not take boys at the same stage at which they would pass on to the public schools if they were not going into the Navy, but you obtain them at an inconvenient and earlier age. I think it is the experience of masters of preparatory schools that boys change a great deal between the age of twelve and thirteen, and as it is desirable that they should pass on somewhere towards the age of thirteen to the public schools, so it seems very desirable to get the boy at the right age when a judgment can be formed, namely, not too near the age of twelve, but rather, if possible, near the age of thirteen.

Another point of great importance is that there should be no interval between the preparatory school and the admission as naval cadets. Any interval between the work of the preparatory school tends to let in the crammer, and cramming at the tender age of twelve or thirteen, or even fourteen, is a thing very much to be deprecated in the interests of the boys themselves. It is also to be deprecated in the interests of the Navy, because the work of the crammer is to get a dull boy through the examination and to beat the clever boy, so that you possibly get the worse article instead of the better, and you find it out too late when the boy is undergoing his training as a naval cadet.

The Question has often been asked, how best to defeat cramming. I venture to advance three points. You must keep the age young if you are to defeat the crammer. But this in itself is not enough. I would congratulate the Admiralty on their very ingenious and successful device in the shape of the Interviewing Committee. That seems to me to have been very happily thought out for the purpose of defeating the crammer. I have read, as I have no doubt many of your Lordships have read, with very great interest the Papers that have been laid from time to time before Parliament containing reports upon that system of testing candidates for admission to Osborne, and I think the Admiralty deserve hearty congratulation upon the system they have devised, for it certainly is calculated to a large extent to defeat the crammer. There is a third point, and it is that too much knowledge of facts should not be required in any examination which has to be passed. If a large knowledge of facts is required of very young candidates, that lends itself at once to the system of cramming and all the mischiefs which come from cramming young boys. Difficult, catchy examination papers are another excellent way of playing into the hands of the crammer, and I think the Board of Admiralty is to be congratulated on having found a suitable form of literary examination to follow upon the system of the Interviewing Committee.

There is one point more which I think ought to be considered in the interests of the boys who, after they have got to Osborne, are found not to be altogether suitable and have to be weeded out.

If you take the boys too old, then when the weeding-out time comes—that is, after about a year at Osborne—the boys are too old to be admitted to a public school, because the best public schools will not take boys beyond the age of fourteen. Therefore, it seems very desirable to keep the age for admission not higher than thirteen. I do not know exactly what my noble friend will have to tell the House in answer to my Question, but I hope that while on the one hand the danger is avoided of putting the age too young, as I think it was put when this system was first introduced, he will also avoid the mischiefs which would follow from raising the age too high. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, my noble friend has raised a point of very considerable interest and one which has been the subject of anxious and careful consideration by the Board of Admiralty ever since this new scheme was introduced. When the new scheme for the admission of cadets to Osborne came into operation in 1903 there was a range for the would-be cadet of a whole year; that is to say, he was allowed to come up before the Interviewing Committee at any of the three meetings of the Committee held within the year. Consequently you might have a boy at Osborne just over twelve years of age, and you might get a boy there at thirteen. The results of the Interviewing Committees for the first year were that a strong recommendation was made by these Committees to the effect that the period at which a boy might come up should be shortened, and that at any rate the first four months after twelve should be struck out. In the second year—in 1904—that change was made, and the boy was only allowed a choice of one of two examinations during the eight months before he reached the age of thirteen.

A good deal of correspondence took place, and we had a considerable amount of evidence. The preparatory schools were very strong indeed that a boy should be allowed to remain with them as long as possible. They took the view, which will, I think, commend itself to your Lordships, and which my noble friend Lord Shuttleworth also adopted, that thirteen was just about the age when it was natural that a boy should cease to be at a preparatory school and should go to a public school. Another consideration is that if a boy does not succeed in getting into Osborne when he goes up a little before reaching the age of thirteen, then at any rate the public schools are quite open to him. I am afraid there always must be many rejections for Osborne, because we have, time after time, pretty nearly twice as many candidates as we have possibilities of admission. Then, again, a system had crept in of holding over boys from one examination to another. Cadets never were allowed to go up for two examinations, but were sometimes held over for one reason or another from one examination to the next—say from June to October, and they then came up again for consideration, though during the whole of the intervening months, which are important months for a boy of that age, he had passed out of the ken of the Committee and the reports of the masters were not renewed.

Considering all these circumstances, the Board of Admiralty have now come to the conclusion that the wise thing to do is still further to cut short the period in which the would-be cadet should be examined. It is not proposed to make the period at which he will enter Osborne later. That will remain at thirteen. But it is proposed that he should only come before the Interviewing Committee in the four or five months immediately preceding his arrival at the age of thirteen. By that means we shall get a uniform age—thirteen—at which cadets will enter Osborne. Osborne is now full, and there is a range among the cadets of something over two years, for, on account of illness or backwardness, the time the boy remains is occasionally extended.

I have stated the proposal with regard to the age of entry. I should now like to take the opportunity of saying one or two things with regard to Osborne. I wish to dispel the idea which, I find from my own correspondence, and also from letters in the newspapers, exists that entrance into Osborne is to be gained by patronage, favouritism, and all sorts of what I hold to be improper means. I can assure your Lordships that that is not the case at all, and, if you will allow me, I would like to state the exact system which is adopted before cadets enter Osborne. I think you will see it is a very open one, and one which is exceedingly fair in its operation. There is no necessity for nomination to Osborne. It is perfectly open to the parent or guardian of any boy who wishes to enter Osborne to get the boy brought before the Interviewing Committee.

All that the parent or guardian has to do is to make application to the Admiralty, who forward a form to be filled up, giving certain particulars with regard to the boy. The parent or guardian is required to state the full name of the candidate, his private address, date of birth, where he was educated, and his father's profession or rank; and the only conditions attached are that the parent or guardian should state that the candidate is willing to enter any of the three branches of the service—engineers, executive, or marines; that it is the intention, if the candidate obtains a cadetship, that he shall adopt the Navy as his profession; and that the parent or guardian shall be prepared to pay in advance quarterly £75 a year as well as the lad's personal expenses while he is four years at the two naval colleges, and shall also provide him with an allowance of £50 a year from the date of leaving Dartmouth to the time he becomes an acting sub-lieutenant. Those are the only conditions required in order to obtain the boy admission to the Interviewing Committee. These Interviewing Committees, as I have said, meet three times a year—in February, June, and October. Each interviewing Committee consists of four members, the president having, at any rate up to the present time, been a flag officer. The Committee sits about three weeks, there being from 150 to 200 boys each time to be interviewed. The boys are summoned up, and when they arrive at the place of interview are given a foolscap sheet of paper, on which they are invited to write an essay on their home life, on the Houses of Parliament, or on some equally easy subject. They have to bring with them a full report from the master of the school at which they had been. They are then one after another shown into the presence of the interviewing Committee, the members of which talk to them for about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. They have before them also the reports of the schoolmaster and the little essay that the boy has written. The conversation consists of matters connected with home life, small questions in history and geography, and so forth, the object being, not to find out the weak points of the boy, but his strong points and what his general intelligence is.

On the results of the conversation and of the report of the schoolmaster the Committee classes these boys in some seven or eight classes. At the same time the boys have to go through a very searching medical examination. After all these operations are performed the reports of the Committee and the reports of the medical officer are laid before a small Committee at the Admiralty, at which the First Lord presides, and the boys selected to go up for the further qualifying examination are taken absolutely on the faith and on the character of the reports in this way brought before the First Lord and his advisers. I do not think it possible to conceive a fairer way of arriving at a decision with regard to boys of that very young age. My noble friend Lord Shuttleworth was quite right when he described this as an admirable invention in order to defeat the operations of the crammer and at the same time arrive at a just estimate of the individual intellectual qualities and capacities as well as the physcial condition of the boys. Out of 150 boys who come up, perhaps eighty or ninety are selected to go through the qualifying examination, which is carried out by the Oxford and Cambridge Board. It consists of a simple examination in various subjects — geography, history, Latin, French, German, and mathematics—which lasts, I think, two and a half days, and the Oxford and Cambridge Board report on the candidates and say which have passed the average test. As a matter of fact, something like 10 per cent. are rejected on the qualifying examination. That is the system.

It is said that the cadets at Osborne are drawn from a very limited class.

I have not been long at the Admiralty, and that particular question seemed to me to be a very interesting one. I therefore asked to be given a return, so far as it could be made out, of the parentage of all the boys that had gone to Osborne since its foundation in 1903; and the return shows how extraordinarily wide is the net that catches the cadet for Osborne. Of those boys eleven were sons of peers, 161 sons of Army officers, eighty-eight sons of naval officers, eighty-three sons of clergymen, sixty-seven sons of merchants and manufacturers, thirty-one sons of barristers, forty-seven sons of solicitors, forty-six sons of medical men, forty-nine sons of civil servants (including the Indian and Consular Service), thirty-one sons of engineers and architects, fourteen sons of schoolmasters, university professors, and the like, twenty-four sons of chartered accountants, stockbrokers, and members of Lloyds, seventeen sons of bank managers and clerks, ten sons of brewers, fourteen sons of land agents, fourteen sons of colonial landowners and planters, ninety sons of country gentlemen and farmers, and forty-seven are classed as independent, and eleven as miscellaneous. I think your Lordships will admit that this is a pretty wide range, and that Osborne cannot be accused of being conducted on a class system. In the case of army or naval officers in necessitous circumstances—and the question as to their being in necessitous circumstances has to be carefully gone into by the First Lord and his advisers at the Admiralty in every single case—or in the case of the widows of such officers who can show that they are really in necessitous circumstances, the fee of £75 is reduced to £40. I think I have fully answered the Question of my noble friend, and I hope your Lordships will think that the system is not altogether one which is worth dismissing without a word of praise.

*EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, I should like to say a few words following the reply of the noble Lord who has just spoken. I need say but very little, as the noble Lord has explained so fully exactly what takes place with regard to the selection of cadets for Osborne. But from my short experience as First Lord of the Admiralty I should like to say that I think the Resolution the Board of Admiralty have come to in regard to modifying the arrangement as to the ages of cadets is a very wise one. There were undoubtedly inconveniences in the practice before, inasmuch as the younger cadets were sometimes left behind, and might be taken on and nominated as cadets at a later stage without being closely in touch with the interviewing Committee, and without the First Lord and his advisers having the last story of the school from which they had come. I found the inconvenience of that. I do not mean to say that I attempted to solve the difficulty in the way the noble Lord has done. I think his solution is a wise one, and one which will work very well.

I was glad to hear what the noble Lord told us with regard to the various classes from whom these cadets are drawn, and I think it is very desirable that those facts should be known, because some persons have thought it incumbent upon them to suggest that Osborne was a close corporation. I can bear testimony to the great care taken by the Interviewing Committee, the First Lord, and his advisers in the selection of these candidates. It is a matter of great importance and great difficulty. May I say a further word upon a most important question touched upon by Lord Shuttleworth—I refer to the question of cramming. I hope the First Lord will succeed in abolishing the crammer. I am not sure that I was quite satisfied that we had done so when I left the Admiralty, but I hope he will become a diminishing quantity. What the Admiralty desire is to get boys with a good private school education and to get it as near as possible complete, and to have as short a margin as may be below the age of thirteen. If we can keep the boy at the private school up to the age of twelve and a half there is not much time for the crammer to get at him, and that is a great advantage. After the cadet goes to Osborne there is a painful process: I refer to the weeding-out process. It is not a very pleasant, but it is a very necessary one, and the advantage of the age-limit we have now is that boys so weeded out are in a position to be passed on to the public schools, and do not feel that they have lost the opportunity of going on through the public schools to Oxford or Cambridge. I entirely concur in the course taken by the Admiralty, and I am confident that it will be beneficial in every way.

ANTI-JEWISH OUTRAGES IN RUSSIA.

Lord NORTHBOURNE: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government if they will lay on the Table of the House any Consular or other official Reports concerning the recent outrages on Jews in Russia, which they may have received. In bringing this subject before your Lordships' notice, I feel that it will be necessary to detain you for only a very few moments. In the first place, the main facts of the case can in no way whatever be regarded as in dispute. The Jews have always been a persecuted race. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, their persecution in Russia reached an almost unexampled pitch. About twenty-five years ago, after the passing of the law of 1880, they became infinitely more oppressed, and ten years later they became more oppressed still.

Your Lordships are familiar with the events which took place some five or six years ago at Kichineff, and at the close of the Russo-Japanese war the flames of violence burst forth in a manner of which you will find scarcely a precedent. We know comparatively little of what was taking place in Russia at that time, but I believe that if the whole series of these outrages and cruelties were collected, it would probably be found that they were equalled only by the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Sicilian Vespers. What has been the instigating spirit chiefly answerable for these persecutions? I was glad to observe that at a meeting held at Queen's Hall, in London, a few months ago, Lord Rothschild acquitted the Tsar himself of any personal responsibility. We all know that the Tsar is not absolute autocrat of everything that goes on in his wide dominions. I am inclined to think that the responsibility for the outrages belongs rather to the Tsar's agents and others than to the Tsar himself.

In asking my noble friend if he is able to lay on the Table the Consular or other official Reports of these proceedings, I do not wish, and I do not anticipate for a moment that he would think it possible, that they should be made use of to bring direct pressure on the Russian Government. No doubt, mixed up and closely connected with the Greek Church, that might raise internal questions of serious difficulty for the Government. But I think it is only right and proper that we should have, more particularly at a time when knowledge is extremely limited, the fullest possible information from the Consular authorities who are expected to give His Majesty's Government advice and information on all such matters. Some years ago when I brought this matter up in the other House the Prime Minister of the day pointed out that if pressure were brought to bear on the Government in diplomatic relations it might possibly have a perfectly opposite effect from that which those who were at the time promoting the matter in Parliament wished. I was glad to notice in *The Times* that some prominent Jews had brought under the notice of the Foreign Office the publication of pamphlets in the chief Russian newspapers instigating such outrages; that representations had been made through the Foreign Office to the Russian Government; and that not only had the pamphlets in question, which were producing a most mischievous effect, been withdrawn, but the author, who was in the employ of the Government, has been summarily dismissed.

Papers which we asked for in the year 1882 were granted. I would hope that the objections which were raised by Mr. Gladstone twenty-five years ago with regard to diplomatic difficulties were more urgent and more cogent then than now, and that the information for which I ask may be forthcoming. The Resolution which was passed at the large meeting in London to which I have referred, and which was attended by distinguished persons of every creed and denomination, declared that—

> "This representative meeting proclaims its sense of deep indignation and horror at the organised massacres and outrages on Jews in Russia, which, in the opinion of all Englishmen, without distinction of creed or party, are

an offence to civilisation and a disgrace to humanity; this meeting desires to express its keen sympathy with the survivors of the outrages and with the families of the victims."

That Resolution was moved by the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Ripon and was supported in a letter by the Archbishop of Canterbury, by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, by leading nonconformists, and by Lord Milner. Therefore, in view of the unanimous feeling on the part of all Parties in Great Britain I hope it may be possible for the noble Lord to lay the information for which I ask, in order that it may be brought so prominently before the public that it may, if not directly, at any rate, indirectly, have some effect on the Russian Government in moving them to do what they can to put a stop to what is recognised on all sides as a perfect outrage on the civilisation of the twentieth century. And I am bringing this matter forward to-day partly from the fact that I am not alone among your Lordships in having the taint or the honour of being myself of Hebrew extraction.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, I am certain that I express not my own feelings only, but those of all your Lordships who have listened to the brief but eloquent statement of my noble friend, when I say that he has touched a sympathetic note, and that nobody can possibly complain of his having brought the subject forward. But, my Lords, there are cases in which sympathy points one way and the necessities of the situation another. The Foreign Office are obliged to consider every question of this kind from the very standpoint which my noble friend has admitted that Mr. Gladstone himself indicated on a rather similar occasion in 1882. It may be asked why there should be any difficulty in laying these Papers on the Table of the House when only a few days ago I laid before Parliament a large Blue-book in regard to the affairs of Macedonia. The circumstances are totally different. The position of this country, and of the Foreign Office as representing this country, is quite different in the case of a foreign Power with which it has some specific engagement, either with or without other Powers, but generally with them, in regard to the internal administration of the whole or of some part of that country. The reason why from time to time the representatives of the Foreign Office in Parliament are able to lay Papers, without committing any diplomatic impropriety, in regard to Macedonia, Armenia, and Crete, is that in regard to those countries there are specific engagements binding Turkey and other Powers, and which give those Powers a specific right of interference and of representation under certain clauses of well-known treaties.

But, my Lords, the case is totally different when you are dealing with the exceedingly delicate matter of the relations of two or more of the great Powers of Europe in regard to matters which are, strictly speaking, domestic in character, and in regard to which there is nothing limiting the jurisdiction of the particular Power in question in its dominion over its own subjects; nothing, in fact, which gives a treaty right of intervention to another Power. If I were to consent to lay on the Table of the House such Papers as are now asked for, I might be the cause of raising very difficult controversies, and of setting a precedent which in itself might be one of doubtful propriety. The laying of Papers before Parliament entails the possibility of debate in Parliament.

I do not believe the course taken by Mr. Gladstone in 1882 furnishes a precedent for the demand made on this occasion by my noble friend. The name of Mr. Gladstone indeed suggests another precedent pointing in a totally different direction. One of the most notable events in Mr. Gladstone's great career was the manner in which he called attention to the outrages in the Kingdom of Naples by the publication of a celebrated pamphlet, and a short time after the Crimean War Lord Clarendon, who was then Foreign Secretary, addressed a famous despatch to the Government of Naples in regard to those outrages. The controversy which this led to is well known. The moral to be drawn from that celebrated diplomatic controversy is that a great Power ought not to enter into discussions with the

Foreign Offices of other States or to take steps in Parliament which give rise to discussions pointing to the idea of intervention unless they are prepared to face it in the manner in which it was faced on that occasion.

If I were to lay Papers on the Table, I could not lay any which would deal with the subject of outrages on Jews in Russia without also laying Papers which would deal with many of the most difficult and delicate questions with which the Russian Government is itself dealing, as I hope sucessfully, by means of the great reforms that are now being introduced into the country. These are matters essentially for the Russian Government itself, and the laying of Papers and the possible discussion resulting therefrom might be regarded in Russia as an illegitimate interference with matters with which we have no real concern.

I desire to express my full sympathy with the Motion of my noble friend, and though my Answer may appear to be couched in language of rather too strict diplomatic propriety I hope that my noble friend will realise that I, and, I am sure the whole House are not wanting in feeling in this matter, but that we desire that these terrible outrages may cease and that we wish all success to the great enterprise of reform upon which the Russian Government is now entering. From these reforms alone is there any hope of these long-standing oppressions ceasing; while, on the contrary, they might be increased by any hurried or ill-timed intervention on our part.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, this is one of the cases in which the natural desire to express what is in one's mind is corrected by a trembling fear lest any spoken word may do harm instead of good. At the same time I feel that the House owes its gratitude to the noble Lord who has called attention to the matter, and I am quite sure that every one in the House also appreciates the reply which the noble Lord on the Front Bench has given in as full a way and as sympathetic a tone as any of us could have expected or desired.

It is impossible at this moment to exaggerate the feeling that is abroad in England of regard and sympathy and distress with respect to the lamentable incidents which have accompanied some of the troublous days through which Russia has been been passing. We all recognise to the full the delicacy and difficulty attending even the most kindly spoken word at such a time. I know nothing of the arts and customs of the world of diplomacy, but I imagine that things have greatly changed since the days long gone by when the voice of one country was roughly, almost rudely, outspoken in criticising internal events in the history of another country.

England nearly 350 years ago, and again just 250 years ago, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and in what I suppose in this House we should call the reign of Charles II., dealt with subjects kindred to these, but words that were possible then would be not only undesirable but intensely mischievous to-day; and it is especially difficult to speak when those of whom we desire to speak are in obvious perplexities themselves owing to internal difficulties of no small magnitude. Therefore, I am certain that the real explanation of the comparative silence of the English people at a time when they have been deeply stirred is due not to any lack of sympathy or care about incidents which good men everywhere deplore, and, not the least, good men in Russia itself, but to a sense of the delicacy and danger of the situation. All England will join as one man in supporting His Majesty's Government in any word that could properly and wisely be spoken with respect to what we feel upon a subject such at this.

We feel intensely for those in Russia on whom rests at this time this high responsibility, and we appreciate the difficulty of their position. It is to strengthen the hands of those in Russia itself who fully, as we are certain, share with us the desire that such incidents as these should become impossible anywhere in Europe, that we express to-day the thankfulness that we in this country would feel were we to learn that it had been found practicable to take such steps as should render the recurrence of these incidents impossible. More than this it would be wrong and unwise to say; less than this we could hardly say when the subject was brought forward. I thank the noble Lord who has introduced this matter and the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for what he has said in reply, and I earnestly trust that the consummation we all desire to see may come about in its entirety.

*The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, if I add one word to this discussion it is only for fear that my silence might be regarded as an indication that I differ from that which has been said to your Lordships by those who have already addressed you. We are all of us deeply moved by the sufferings of these poor people. We all of us feel that any efforts which our diplomacy can make for the mitigation of their sufferings should be made; but while we have that feeling we may be permitted to doubt whether the precise course which seems to find favour with the noble Lord who brought this subject forward is really calculated to promote the object which he has in view. Public diplomatic intervention in the domestic affairs of a foreign Power is not to be lightly undertaken; and I think the noble Lord who represents the Foreign Office was right when he said that interference of that kind should not be attempted unless we are prepared to pursue the matter further and see to it that our diplomatic pressure does not pass unheeded.

But there is another consideration which occurs to me, and which I venture to mention to your Lordships. These Consular officers are not members of the Diplomatic Service. It is their business primarily to look after the commercial interests of this country and to protect British citizens from injustice or ill-usage. It is no doubt desirable that they should from time to time report to us as fully as possible upon any important questions which may attract their attention, and certainly we must not discourage them from supplying us with such Reports. But if such Reports are to be made public and to be used as a basis for public remonstrance, I am afraid you will find that a great part of the usefulness of your Consular officers will be taken away from them. Their ability to serve their country to the best advantage depends really upon their being upon good terms with the Governments to which they are accredited and they certainly will not be on good terms with those Governments if they are discovered in the act of sending home Reports damaging to the reputation of the countries in which they reside, and if those Reports are then made use of as a foundation for diplomatic action.

I do not think we can realise this aspect of the question better than by trying to imagine what our own feelings would be if some foreign Consul, resident in this country or in a British possession, were to send home to his own Government reports reflecting adversely on our domestic administration, and if such Reports were then made public in the country to which that Consul belonged and thrown in our teeth. But I trust your Lordships will not imagine for a moment that I yield to any of those who have addressed you this evening in my earnest desire that every opportunity may be taken of making known the deep interest with which we regard the events to which the noble Lord referred, and our hope that the condition of these unfortunate people may receive some amelioration.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order); amendments made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—

E. Mansfield, L. Ranfurly (*E. Ranfurly*), agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.: Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Huddersfield Corporation Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Great North of Scotland Order Confirmation Bill (by Order). Read the third time, and passed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

That, in the case of the Metropolitan Water Board Bill, petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to insert their addditional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit.

That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to insert their additional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit.

That, in the case of the Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill, petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to insert their additional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit.

That, in the case of the Hammersmith, City, and North East London Railway Bill, petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the petition of "John Knill and Company and the Pearl Life Assurance Company, Limited," against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with.

That, in the case of the Shrewsbury Corporation Water, petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.

That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill, petition for additional provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to insert their additional provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit.

Resolutions agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm the capitalisation in past years of certain profits of H. R. Baines and Company, Limited; and for other purposes." [H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords.]

Also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the provisions of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Works and Additional Powers) Act, 1871, with respect to superannuation fund." [Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Accrington District Gas and Water Board to make new waterworks; and for other purposes." [Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Holyhead Waterworks Company; and for other purposes." [Holyhead Water Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the North Sussex Gas Company to supply water in certain parishes in Sussex; and to confer further powers upon that Company." [North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for authorising a lease of the Manchester and Milford Railway to the Great Western Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for conferring further powers on the Mersey Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Mersey Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the urban district council of the Wolstanton United Urban District to manufacture and supply gas and to provide for the transfer to the council of the works, premises, and business of the Chesterton Gas Light Company, Limited, and of so much of the mains, pipes, and other works of the Corporation of Burslem and of the Corporation of Newcastle-under-Lyme, respectively, as are within the Wolstanton United Urban District; and for other purposes." [Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to effect a fusion of the undertaking of the Scottish Imperial Insurance Company with that of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society; and for other purposes." [Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Great Central Railway Company to acquire the Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railway, to construct new railways and works in connection therewith; and for other purposes." [Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for conferring further powers on the Mirfield Gas Company." [Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords.]]

H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [Lords]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]; Mersey Railway Bill [Lords]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

CONVENTS AND CONVENTUAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

Petition from Altrincham, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Liverpool; and, Todmorden; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Tormorden, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against Alteration of Law; From Abington; Adderbury (two); Alnwick; Alvescot (two); Amble (two); Armitage; Ashtead; Ashton-under-Lyne; Ashton-on-Trent (two); Barling Magna (two); Bath; Bathford; Beckington (two); Beddington; Bexhill;

Bilston; Birkenhead (three); Blackburn; Blickling; Blo' Norton (two); Bodicote; Bolton (two); Botleys and Lyne; Bradley; Broadwell (two); Bromley; Bryngwyn (two); Buckland Dinham; Castle Cary; Castleton; Chale; Chasetown; Cheltenham; Christian Malford (two); Cranborne (two); Devizes (two); Dobcross (two); Dorking; Eastbourne (ten); East Dean; East Markham; East Quantockshead; East Rainton-cum-Mossley; East Stockwith; Eccles; Edlingham; Ewshott (two); Flixton (two); Foxley (two); Firle and Beddingham; Frampton Cotterell; Goodleigh; Gorton; Greenhead; Grittleton; Hailsham; Hellingley; Hempsted; Henstridge; Herbranston (two); Heywood (two); Highman; Holbrooks; Holmwood; Hooton Pagnell (two); Horton-cum-Piddington (two); Hulme (two); Hurstpierpoint (two); Hutton; Ickham (two); Islington; Jacobstowe (two); Jevington; Kidwelly (two); Kilsby; Kingswood (three); Kirkby Lonsdale; Kirton; Langport (two); Little Houghton; Little Moss; Little Yeldham; Llangattock Lingoed; Llanvihangel Crucorney; Lockwood; Lound (two); Lumb in Rossendale; Marbury (two); Market Harborough; Nether Worton; New Groombridge (two); Northaw (two); Norton; Oldham; Old Sodbury (two); Over Worton; Oxted, Limpsfield, and Tatsfield; Paddington; Padiham; Patshull; Pendleton; Pevensey; Pitminster (two); Pitsea; Polebrooke; Quinton (two); Royston; St. Oswald's, Manchester (two); St. Paul's, Werneth; St. Thomas, Aldcliffe; Sandhurst; Shaw (two); Shenstone; Shirburn; Shrewsbury; Sibbertoft; Silkstone (two); Silton (two); South Warnborough (two); Stockland; Stodmarsh; Stogumber; Stoke Doyle; Stonall in Shenstone; Stotfold; Sutton (two); Swalcliffe; Swindon; Thorley (two); Totland Bay (two); Twyford (two); Twywell (two); Wadworth (two); Wartling; Wells; West Bradley; West Bromwich; Westcott (two); Westhoughton (six); West Retford; Whittington; Whitchurch (two); Widford; Willingdon (three); Windermere; Winterbourne Down; and, Withycombe (two); to lie upon the Table.

RELIEF OF NECESSITOUS SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Petition from Cockermouth, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Manchester, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (MONMOUTHSHIRE.)

Petition from Briercliffe, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Padiham, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Petitions for alteration; From Carlisle; Leicester; Norwich; and, Oldham; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.]

HAYES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; *Mr. John Ward*]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 13) Warrant 1906, dated 22nd March, 1906, [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3543 and 3544 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PENNY POSTAGE.

Copy ordered, "of Letters addressed to the Postmaster-General by the hon. Member for Canterbury, dated October 1904 and February 1906, on the subject of Universal Penny Postage (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 34, of Session 1887)."—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*)

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return ordered, "of the Amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March, 1906, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 162, of Session 1905):—

£2½ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	£2¾ per Cent. War Loan.	Other Securities.	
				Annuities for terms of years.	Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills.

—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "of all Moneys contributed out of the rates by the county council and other local bodies in each county in Ireland during each financial year since the establishment of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, for the purposes of schemes under The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899."—(*Mr. Ginnell.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Married Marines—Money in lieu of Rations.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will consider the advisability of according to married marines the privilege enjoyed by other ranks in the service of taking out the value of their rations in money, thus giving to the men a chance of securing in the open market the best quantity and quality of food.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Admiralty have discretionary power to pay an allowance of 6d. per day in lieu of the bread and meat ration to which the marine is entitled when serving ashore; but this discretion is only exercised in special cases where it is inconvenient or impossible for the men to draw the ration in kind. This arrangement is purely a matter of convenience and in no sense a privilege, as the men could not possibly buy with the allowance meat and bread equal either in quality or quantity to the official ration. It is not, therefore, considered that it would be in the interest of the married men to allow them to draw the money allowance, and it is not proposed to make any change in the existing regulations.

The Royal Commission on Poor Law.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any new members have been added to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law; and whether, pending their appointment, the sittings of the Commission have been suspended.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) One member was added on the 13th February last. There has been no suspension of the sittings of the Commission.

Close time for Herrings in Scottish Waters.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow Camlachie): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that nowhere in the United Kingdom is the herring fishery prosecuted all the year round excepting in the Firth of Clyde; and whether the close time in other Scottish waters is maintained by voluntary observance on the part of the fishermen, or by compulsory enforcement on the part of the Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am not aware that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The only close time for herrings which has existed recently in other Scottish waters, namely, that in the Stornoway district, is now, I understand, being abandoned; it was maintained by voluntary observance.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the duties of the scientific member of the Scottish Fishery Board include the examination of herring caught out of season, with a view to determining its fitness or unfitness for human food.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) No, Sir. It is not alleged that the fish are at any time unfit for human food if they are fresh.

Meeting of the London Immigration Board.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings of the immigration boards in London were held during the period from the 1st January to the 10th March, and how many since the 10th March to the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) There were twenty-four meetings between the 1st January and the 10th March, and one since, namely, on the 12th March.

Import Tax on the Gold Coast Colony—Use of Revenue derived therefrom.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that an increased ad valorem duty of 6 per cent. on imports to the Gold Coast Colony was agreed to by the taxpayers on the expressed condition, as stated in a memorial dated 2nd June, 1889, that the increased revenue was to be applied to the introduction of an improved system of sanitation: whether, seeing that no such system of sanitation has since been introduced, though the tax has been levied, he can state to what purpose the fund so raised has been applied; and whether he will now give instructions for the work of sanitation to be carried out in the interests of the people upon whom the taxes were levied.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) It will be seen from the preamble to the Gold Coast Customs Tariff Amendment Ordinance 1889, that the increased duty on imports was imposed to increase the public revenue in order to "meet the expenditure requisite for the further improvement of roads and other means of local communication, the extension of telegraphic lines, the education of the people, the extension and development of the judicial system, and for other objects for the advancement of the Colony." The Colonial Government made no conditions with the taxpayers; and the memorial to which the hon. Member refers appears to be a petition from certain of the inhabitants of the town of Cape Coast who could in no sense be regarded as representative of the general body of taxpayers. The subject of improving sanitation has continuously received much attention in the Gold Coast, and considerable sums of public money have been spent on it.

Leave of Gold Coast Official.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, owing to the regulations with regard to leave of absence of European officials in the Gold Coast Colony, two years' salary have to be paid for one year's service; and, whether, in view of the drain caused thereby upon the local treasury and of the fact that no such regulation prevails in the mercantile service, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Officials in the Gold Coast and the other British West African Colonies usually receive, after each period of twelve months' residential service, leave on full salary for four months in England and for the time necessarily spent on the voyages home and out again, the whole amounting to between five and six months. Accordingly not two years salary, but salary for between seventeen and eighteen months has usually to be paid in respect of each twelve months residential service. The proportion of leave is certainly high, although not so high as the hon. Member's Question appears to imply. But the circumstances of West Africa are exceptional, and I am advised that the amount of leave allowed is at present no more than is necessary to secure efficient service in the climate and conditions of West Africa, and that a reduction in the leave would probably be followed by increased mortality and invaliding.

Inspection of Imported Boneless Meat.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether boneless meat imported into Great Britain from the United States is subject to any inspection in this country; and, if not, whether he will make inquiry respecting the use which is made of this boneless meat; and whether it is purchased by manufacturers of sausages and sold as native meat.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am not aware of any special arrangement with regard to the inspection of boneless meat from the United States, but in England and Wales, with which I alone am concerned, all meat exposed for sale, or deposited for purposes of sale, or preparation for sale, is liable to inspection by the officers of local authorities, and this liability extends to boneless meat imported from the United States as well as to other meat. The bulk of the packages of this boneless meat, however, bear labels showing that there has been official inspection in the United States by officers of the United States Bureau of Animal Industry. I understand that boneless meat is mainly used for making sausages and pies, and for stews, etc., at the cheaper eating houses. I have no information to show that it is sold as native meat.

Paddington Council Prosecution for Sale of Tuberculised Pork.

MR. FIELD: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been directed to the recent abortive prosecution attempted by the Paddington Council, nearly six months after the surrender of the alleged tuberculised pigs by a trader in home-grown pork; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent municipal authorities spending the ratepayers' money by frivolous prosecutions against native meat traders.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) It rests with the local authority to determine whether they will institute proceedings for penalties in cases of this kind, and I am not empowered to interfere with their discretion in the matter. I am, however, informed that in the particular instance referred to the carcase was seized at a butcher's as tuberculous by the meat inspector of the borough council, that the diagnosis was confirmed by the acting medical officer of health, and that the carcase was ordered by the magistrate at the Marylebone Police Court to be destroyed. I am also informed that the borough council decided in October last to take proceedings for penalties against the salesman at the Central Meat Market from whom the pig was purchased by the butcher; but that the proceedings were deferred pending an interview between the chairman of the sanitary committee of the council and the medical officer of health of the city, and that, subsequently, hearing was adjourned for a month at the request of the defendant.

Suggested Import Duty on Foreign Slates.

MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the magnitude of the trade in slates, especially in Carnarvonshire, and to the depression in that trade at present existing, owing to the importation of slates from abroad free from any contribution to the Imperial Revenue or local rates and taxes, he would be prepared to favourably consider a proposal that all such foreign slates should pay an import duty, at all events equivalent to the Imperial and local burdens which are incident to those produced in this country.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The slackness in the slate trade appears to be rather attributable to the general depression in the building trade of the United Kingdom than to the imports of slates into this country, which I find were less last year than in any of the past five years. The figures are as follows (in thousands)—1901, £23; 1902, £286; 1903, £467; 1904, £340; 1905, £262. I am not prepared to recommend the imposition of an import duty on slates.

Mercantile Marine Engineers.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any official information showing from what employments the engineers of the mercantile marine are recruited; whether the conditions have been made more stringent of late, indicating the most important particulars; and whether it is known if any of the shipping companies train their own engineers as mechanicians.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I understand that the great majority of certificated marine engineers have served an apprenticeship to engineering works but I have no official information as to the employments from which engineers not holding certificates have been recruited. The regulations have not been made more stringent of late to any appreciable extent. The most recent alteration of importance was the extension of the period of apprenticeship from three to four years. This came into force on 1st January 1904. Several of the large steamship companies train a number of their engineers as mechanics in their own workshops where repairs and renewals are effected, the men serving a regular apprenticeship.

Worn Out Carriages on the London and North Western Railway.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the use in passenger trains on the London and North Western Railway of carriages obviously worn out; and whether he possesses any means of inducing the directors to desist from so dangerous a practice.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No, Sir, this matter has not been brought to my notice. If my hon. friend will furnish me with particulars, I will make inquiry.

Disorderly Chinese in Liverpool.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the Chinese fracas at Birkenhead, when about twenty or thirty Chinese, being assembled in a home in Brook Street, gambling, had a riotous altercation; and whether, seeing that this followed upon thirty Chinese being arrested last month in Liverpool for gambling, and in view of the number of objectionable Chinese characters in Liverpool and neighbourhood, the Govment will be prepared to introduce legislation to obviate the evil.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have had reports on the two cases mentioned, and find that in the Birkenhead case the police did not think the occurrence serious enough to justify legal proceedings, while in the Liverpool case the magistrate discharged the prisoners, five in number. My information does not lead me to think that there is any "number of objectionable Chinese characters in Liverpool and the neighbourhood" causing an evil which calls for any special remedy.

Piecework Trade and the Factory Act.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the number of piecework trades still needing the protection of Section 116, Sub-section (5) of the Factory and Workshops Act, in respect of particulars of work and wages, he contemplates further extensions of that section by Order; and, if so, at what date and to what trades.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Yes, inquiries are now proceeding with regard to a number of industries not at present included; but I cannot say when or in what cases further extensions will be made until I have received and considered the reports which have been called for. I hope to receive some of them shortly.

Conviction of Ex-Police Constable Rolls.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his decision and the confirmatory opinion of the Lord Chief Justice that the conviction of ex-police constable Rolls was right were partly based upon reports and information furnished by the police authorities, which were not accessible to Rolls or his friends; and whether, in view of the fact that the petitioners for redress strongly impugn the police authorities in their conduct of the prosecution and of subsequent inquiries, he will permit the solicitors acting in Rolls's interest to inspect all the documents which were placed before him and the Lord Chief Justice respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I had before me, and I submitted to the Lord Chief Justice, all the papers relating to this case, including all the representations made on behalf of Rolls, the reports made to me by trustworthy police officers on the points in the case on which the prisoner's friends suggested that further investigation was required, and the shorthand notes of the trial. All police reports and other communications made to the Home Office in criminal cases are necessarily treated as confidential, and I can make no exception to the rule in this case.

Deaths Caused by Motor Traffic.

MR. T. DAVIES (Fulham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of deaths caused by motor and other mechanically-driven vehicles in the years 1903 and 1904 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The following figures for England and Wales are supplied to me by the Registrar-General.—

Nature of Vehicle.	1903.			1904.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Motor car or carriage -	*34	5	39	†41	18	59
Motor cycle - -	12	1	13	13	3	16
Motor omnibus - -	—	—	—	1	1	2
Electric tram - -	‡41	23	64	33	22	55
Steam tram - - -	1	—	1	2	—	2
Traction engine - -	§19	—	19	28	1	29
Motor dray, wagon, etc.	1	—	1	9	—	9
Steam roller - -	4	—	4	4	1	5
	112	29	141	131	46	177

* Including two cases where the coroner's jury returned verdicts of suicide.
† Including two cases where the coroner's jury returned verdicts of manslaughter.
‡ Including one case where the coroner's jury returned verdict of manslaughter.
§ Including one case where the coroner's jury returned verdict of suicide.

I am unable to give the figures for Scotland and Ireland.

Pay of Waterguard Branch of the Customs Service.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether seeing that the preventive officers of the waterguard are now charged with the duties of carrying out the regulations under the Aliens Act, in addition to their former duties of boarding all vessels from abroad, enforcing the laws for preventing introduction of infectious disease, rummaging for contraband goods, searching passengers' baggage, collecting duties, and generally guarding the ports and harbours, and also in addition to the landing of foreign animals, examination of free goods in bulk, and the exportation of coal, and further, various duties under the Merchant Shipping Acts, Post Office regulations, and Foreign Enlistment Acts, he will consider the advisability of increasing their wages of £95 a year, rising by increments of £5 a year, to £150.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Preventive officers of the waterguard branch of the Customs service are of two classes, viz.: Upper section, scale of salary, £160—£7 10s. £200;—Lower section, scale of salary, £95—£5—£150. At the larger ports they are supervised by chief preventive officers carrying a scale of pay of £240 to £400. For the purposes of the Aliens Act certain officers of the chief preventive class and of the upper section have been appointed immigration officers by the Home Office, and to these officers has been assigned the duty of carrying out the important regulations under the Act, including the inspection of immigrants from an immigrant ship, and the granting or withholding of leave to land. Allowances of £30 and £20 per annum, in addition to their ordinary salary, are granted to preventive officers of the upper section in respect of the performance of their special duties as immigration officers. The duties under the Aliens Act devolving on the waterguard staff, other than those appointed immigration officers, are of a routine nature, such as collecting and checking returns of aliens from non-immigrant ships, and in character differ but little from the work previously performed by them under The Registration of Aliens Act, 1836, now repealed. The performance of such duties has not added materially, either in volume or responsibility, to the ordinary work of the lower section preventive officers referred to in the Question, and consequently there exist no grounds for granting them an improved scale of pay on account of the Aliens Act. Any increase of routine work arising therefrom would be met so far as necessary by increase of staff.

Petition of Assistant Clerks.

Mr. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will consider the petition presented to the late Secretary to the Treasury, in November last, by certain assistant clerks (new class), with reference to the inequalities in their salaries.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I regret that I have been unable to make the concessions asked for in the petition.

Canadian Cattle Dipping Regulations.

Major RENTON (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Canadian Government issued an order in 1905 that cattle were to be dipped, twice within a fortnight, in a mixture of sulphur and quicklime, on account of an outbreak of mange; and, if so, whether he will lay a copy upon the Table.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We are informed by the High Commissioner for Canada that he has no knowledge of such an order having been issued in 1905, but the Report of the Minister of Agriculture for that year has not yet been received in this country. An order was, however, issued in June, 1904, requiring the cattle in certain parts of the country to be dipped in a preparation of lime and sulphur. It is known that parasitic mange has been prevalent in certain parts of the Dominion for some years past.

Cattle Statistics.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will state the number of cattle in this country at successive periods, such as the following, in 1884, 1890, 1896, 1900, and 1905; or, if it be not possible to give these, will he give any valuable figures similar, showing the percentage of cattle in this country in previous years compared with what are in the country at the present time.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The number of cattle in Great Britain in each of the years mentioned is as follows:—1884, 6,269,141; 1890, 6,508,632; 1896, 6,493,582; 1900, 6,805,170; 1905, 6,987,020. The annual volume of agricultural statistics for 1905 contains a table giving the number of cattle for each year since 1876.

Expenditure on Law Courts.

Mr. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh Central): To ask the First Commissioner of Works what amount of money has been spent during the last fifty years upon the chief law courts in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The labour and time which would be involved in such a Return would, in my opinion, exceed its usefulness, and in these circumstances I do not feel justified in authorising its preparation.

Appointment of a Lady Visitor for Liverpool Schools.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the President of the Board of Education if he is aware that when a vacancy occurred recently on the Liverpool School Board for a lady visitor, one of the applicants for the position, although her name had been on the books for about six years, was passed over, and a person whose name had only been on the books for two years was appointed; whether he will refer the matter to the Liverpool authorities asking them to explain why such a course was adopted; in what way the senior applicant was disqualified; and also what the object is in retaining her name on the books when, on every occasion of a vacancy, a person whose name has not been before the School Board Authorities for so long a period is given the preference.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board have no information on the subject. I have no power to interfere with the discretion of the Liverpool local education authority in making appointments of this kind; and I do not see, therefore, that there is any ground for my intervention.

Clearance of Whisky from Bond.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the quantities of whisky cleared out of bond in each year during the last ten years; how much of each year's clearance was whisky which had been made and in bond for one year; how much of it was whisky which had been made and in bond for two years; how much of it was whisky which had been made and in bond for three years; and how much of it was whisky which had been made and in bond for a longer period than three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The quantities of home-made spirits taken out of bond for home consumption during each of the ten years to 31st March, 1905, are shown in Table XXVII. of the 48th Annual Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue [Cd. 2633], and the quantities cleared for export in Table XXX. of the same Report. No information is available as to the proportion of whisky in the total quantities or as to the age of the spirits, nor can exact figures yet be given as to quantities of spirits cleared in 1905–6.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Timothy M'Carthy.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application for reinstatement of Timothy M'Carthy, an evicted tenant, of Tarmons, Waterville, has been received by the Congested Districts Board; and whether his case will be dealt with in connection with the purchase of land by the Board in that district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The Congested Districts Board will inquire into the circumstances of the case in due course.

Evicted Tenants on the Leader Estate, Dromagh, County Cork.

MR. FLYNN (Cork N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the undertaking of Estates Commissioners to send an inspector, at an early date, to inquire into the position of the Leader Estate, Dromagh, county Cork, in regard to the evicted tenants and the available untenanted land, the inspector will be instructed to visit at the same time the Clery estate, Lagsigh, Knocknagree, in the immediate district, which has been offered to the Commissioners since March, 1905, with a view to immediate reinstatement of the evicted tenant, Mrs. O'Sullivan, and in order that farming operations may be undertaken before the spring season has expired.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have instructed one of their inspectors to visit and report on the Clery estate, county Cork, and they hope soon to be able to make inquiries with regard to evicted tenants on the Leader estate in the same county.

Purchase of the Marshall Estate, Kanturk.

MR. FLYNN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners can state what is the present position of the Marshall Estate, Pouleen, Kanturk: whether the Commissioners have sanctioned the amount of advance agreed upon for the purchase of the agricultural portion of the estate; and whether, in view of the willingness of the occupiers of the town tenancies to purchase on reasonable terms and the enabling section of the Purchase Act of 1903, the Commissioners will decline to advance the purchase money pending a sale of the urban portion to the present tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that the advances in this case have already been sanctioned. The estate which is being sold comprises the agricultural part of the property only, no application in regard to the town holdings having been made.

Percentage of Attendances at Irish Rural National Schools.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the percentage of attendance in the rural national schools for the year ending 1905 in the following parishes in county Down: Newry, Glen, Clonallon, Clonduffs, and Drumgath respectively; the total percentage of attendance in all the schools in the above parishes; and the total percentage of attendance in all the schools in the Kilkeel union district for the same year.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that, so far as can at present be ascertained, the percentage of the average daily attendance of pupils in national schools in Kilkeel union or rural district to the average number on the rolls in 1905 was 68·9. Similar information cannot be given for parishes, as the schools are not now arranged according to parishes, owing to the risk of confusion between the civil parish and the two ecclesiastical parishes.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, how many county inspectors, head constables, and sergeants are there in the Royal Irish Constabulary; and how many are Protestant, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodists, and Roman Catholic respectively.

(Answered by Mr. Bryce.) On 31st December, 1905, the numbers were as follows:—

	Roman Catholics.	Presbyterians.	Protestant, Episcopalian, and other denominations.
County inspectors - -	4	2	31
Head constables - -	157	11	66
Sergeants - - -	1,164	82	372

No separate record of Methodists is kept.

Gambling in Options—British Delegate to Milan Congress.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the advisability of sending a representative to the Milan International Congress, with instructions to co-operate in any endeavour proposed by the various Governments of Europe and America to adopt measures to prohibit gambling in futures, options, and warrants, especially in regard to food stuffs and raw materials.

(Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.) His Majesty's Government are not prepared to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion.

The Judge Advocate-General.

Mr. PAUL: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when and how he will provide an opportunity for discussing the appointment and functions of the Judge Advocate-General, either in the House or in Committee of Supply.

(Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.) As the hon. Member is aware, the Vote for the salary of the Secretary of State for War has still to be taken, when it will be for the Chairman of Ways and Means to decide whether the matters referred to can be considered on that Vote.

Imports and Exports.

Mr. THORNE (West Ham, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what were the total imports and exports during 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905; what were the total reductions in wages for the same years; and what has been the total loss in wages from 1901 to 1905.

(Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.) The figures for which the hon. Member asks are as follows:—

Statement showing the value of the Imports of Foreign and Colonial produce, of the Exports of British and Irish produce, and of the Re-exports of Foreign and Colonial produce, together with the computed amount of the change per week in the wages of those affected by changes in rates of wages in each of the years 1896 to 1905.

Year.	Trade.			Computed Amount of Change of Weekly Wages so far as recorded.	
	Imports.	Exports.		Net Increase per week.	Net Decrease per week.
		British and Irish Produce.	Foreign and Colonial Produce.		
	£	£	£	£	£
1896	441,808,904	240,145,551	56,233,663	26,519	—
1897	451,028,960	234,219,708	59,954,410	31,507	
1898	470,544,702	233,359,240	60,654,748	80,713	—
1899	485,035,583	264,492,211*	65,042,447	90,314	—
1900	523,075,163	291,191,996	63,181,758	208,590	—
1901	521,990,198	280,022,376	67,841,892	—	76,587
1902	528,391,274	283,423,966	65,814,813	—	72,595
1903	542,600,289	290,800,108	69,573,564	—	38,327
1904	551,038,628	300,711,040	70,304,281	—	39,230
1905†	565,279,402	330,023,467	77,798,521	—	6,097
			Total	437,643	232,836

* Inclusive of the value of ships and boats (new), with their machinery, in 1899 and subsequent years. The value of these exports was not included in the Returns prior to the year 1899.

† Preliminary figures.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

7th Battalion Rifle Brigade.

MR. T. HART DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the officer commanding the 7th Battalion Rifle Brigade has applied to the War Office to retransfer his headquarters from Mill Hill to the Dalston barracks; if so, whether his application has been granted, and, if not, on what grounds it has been refused; and whether he is aware that the premises in Dalston sold by the War Office in 1904 for £1,150 have now been let to the Motor Garage Company for £400 a year.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. HALDANE, Haddington): An application was received in October last for the retransfer of the headquarters of the 7th Battalion Rifle Brigade to Dalston but was not entertained because the buildings there were no longer considered suitable for military occupation. Regarding the last part of the question there is no information available at the War Office.

Sparkbrook Factory.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any arrangement was made with the firm that bought the Sparkbrook Royal Small Arms Factory for taking over the workmen at present employed there, or whether it is the intention of the Government to give the workmen employment in other Government factories.

MR. HALDANE: It has been arranged with the firm purchasing Sparkbrook Factory that they shall give preference as regards employment to the men employed by the Government there at the time the factory is handed over and who are no longer required in other Government factories.

"Ragging" at Aldershot.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War if he could make any statement in reference to the "ragging" incident in the Scots Guards to which his attention was called on March 26th.

MR. HALDANE: A Court of Inquiry has been constituted, and will sit this week. It has been decided, in view of the public interest taken in the incident, and with the full assent—I may say the desire—of the military authorities at Aldershot, that the inquiry shall take place in public.

The Judge-Advocate-General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War is there any, and if so, what, parallel for the terms under which Mr. Milvain, K.C., appointed by the late Government when a Member of this House, holds under the present Government the position of Judge-Advocate-General; what are the grounds on which Mr. Milvain holds office till he is seventy years of age, and under what legal sanction is he, till he attains that age, irremovable; and whether his appointment is by patent, and if not, how otherwise.

MR. HALDANE: As regards the first part of the Question I am not aware of any exact parallel. As regards the rest of the Question, would the hon. and learned Member kindly refer to my full reply to a Question put yesterday by my hon. friend the Member for Northampton.†

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Oh, I know that Answer by heart. I think the right hon. Gentleman stated that the appointment is by patent, a Crown appointment, and if that is so——

*MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that he was not entitled to argue, though he might ask for information.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked if Mr. Milvain, under the terms of his appointment, was not removable.

MR. HALDANE: That is always so, but really, so far as substance goes, it is in most cases matter of form. Mr. Milvain was appointed under arrangement with the War Office—it was before my time—with the assent of the Treasury. He gave up two appointments to take this, and he was told he would have no right to a pension, but, subject to his efficiency, his appointment would continue until he was seventy years of age.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: You may well laugh.

Waterford Horse Disease Outbreak.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will direct a public inquiry to be held at Waterford as to the cause of the outbreak of the disease known as South African horse disease, which occurred among the Army horses at the Waterford barracks, and which subsequently spread to civilian horses; and, if so, will he give an opportunity to the Waterford County Council, which body has to pay half the cost of horses belonging to ratepayers slaughtered in order to prevent the disease spreading, an opportunity of being professionally represented at such inquiry, and of tendering such evidence as they may deem advisable as to the origin and spread of the disease.

MR. HALDANE: The hon. Member may be aware that the disease first appeared among military horses in Great Britain, and was much more severe at military stations here than at Waterford. I fear, therefore, that such an inquiry as the hon. Member suggests would be limitless in scope, and could lead to no definite conclusion.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 158.

Mr. POWER: If the county council institute an inquiry as to the origin and spread of the disease, will the right hon. Gentleman see that a representative of the War Office veterinary authorities attends?

Mr. HALDANE: I will consider that.

West African Administration.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it would be possible to arrange conferences between the French, German, and British Governors in West Africa, with a view to the abolition of the salt tax, the arresting of the importation of rum, gin, and firearms, and the abolition of slavery.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill Manchester, N.W.): The Governors of the British West African Colonies have on several occasions had meetings with the French and with the German Governors for the discussion of matters of common interest such as those referred to. Such meetings have been found to be of much advantage and His Majesty's Government hope that they will continue to take place from time to time.

British Indians in South Africa.

Mr. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, with regard to Clause 2 of the instructions in the letter of reference of 21st March last to the South African Committee, and to the statement of the late Colonial Secretary on the 8th August last that the proposal to make inquiry into the *status* of British Indian subjects was under consideration, he will invite the Committee to inquire into and report on the fitness for the franchise of British Indians of position and education.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: It is not proposed specially to invite the Committee to inquire into and report on this matter though their reference is general. I have already, in Answer to previous Questions, stated that the terms of surrender have been held to preclude the grant of the franchise to British Indians except by the will of a Transvaal Parliament.

Chinese Coolies—Repatriation.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire W.R., Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Chinese coolies in the Transvaal are to be informed that, in the opinion of the Government, their condition is such that they are at liberty to demand repatriation.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: His Majesty's Government do not consider that any coolie who desires to return to China should be detained in South Africa merely because he does not possess the money necessary to purchase his discharge. The suggestions of the High Commissioner as to the manner in which the pledge to Parliament will be carried into effect have been made public, and the detailed regulations are under the consideration of the High Commissioner, who has telegraphed that "the intentions of his Majesty's Government will be loyally and fully carried into effect and as speedily as is possible in the circumstances."

Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.): May I ask whether we have any guarantee that the mineowners will not put pressure on coolies to leave, under the plea of disappointment, just before the completion of their contracts, and so put the cost of repatriation on the shoulders of the Government?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: That is just one of those difficult points which require the most careful consideration, and the fact that my hon. friend has raised it is a justification of the delay.

Mr. LANE-FOX: Will the hon. Gentleman be good enough to say when the coolies are to be informed?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I cannot exactly say when, but I hope to make a definite announcement before we separate for the Easter holidays.

South African Papers.

Sir PHILIP MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if further Papers on South African questions will be issued before the departure of the South African Commission.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State does not propose to issue further Papers connected with the task of the Committee, shortly to proceed to South Africa, before their departure.

Indian Army—Officers' Leave Regulations.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, having regard to the great distances in India and to the consequent curtailment of the short privilege leave to England of officers of the India Army, by the time occupied, in certain cases several days, in reaching the port of embarkation, he will suggest to the Commander-in-Chief an alteration in the regulations whereby leave may be counted between the dates of departure from and return to Bombay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): It does not appear desirable to make an exception to the general rule in the case of privilege leave, especially as such leave is not ordinarily spent outside India. Officers stationed in certain remote districts such as Assam, Burma, Biluchistan, and some of the North-West Frontier stations are allowed ninety days privilege leave in the year instead of the ordinary sixty. In 1904 the leave rules were modified so as to allow officers to combine privilege leave with ordinary leave. As at present advised I am not prepared to suggest further modifications in the direction indicated.

Bombay Textile Factories—Hours of Labour.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India when he will be able to state his proposals as to limiting the hours of work in the textile factories of Bombay and the neighbourhood.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The Government of India are consulting local governments as to the defects in the existing law, as they consider that they have not sufficient materials before them to form a final opinion as to the Amendments that may be necessary. They have also taken steps to improve the inspections of factories and to enforce the existing provisions of the law with regard to children. I am not able to make any definite statement, but the subject is receiving my careful attention.

The Bahr-el-Ghazal.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Congo State troops are still in occupation of British territory in the Bahr-el-Ghazal; and, if so, whether His Majesty's Government intend to take any steps to enforce their departure.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): According to the latest reports Congo State troops are still in occupation of certain ports in the Province of the Bahr-el-Ghazal. Negotiations on the subject are now proceeding with the Congo Government.

British Consuls in the Congo—Reports.

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will publish the Reports for the last ten years from the British consuls, officers, and officials, in the Congo territory, in so far as they affect the treatment of British coloured subjects.

SIR E. GREY: The cases of ill-treatment of British native subjects in the Congo, reported by our Consuls, have not been sufficiently serious to justify the publication of the Reports referred to. If there is any case in which the hon. Member is specially interested I shall be glad to give him all the information at my disposal.

West Africa.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that France, Germany, and Great Britain have occupied territories in West Africa for the purpose of promoting Christianity, civilisation, and commerce, it would be possible, in the event of European hostilities, to prevent, by treaty, the spread of hostilities to West Africa, in view of the sufferings that would be inflicted on the innocent peoples.

SIR E. GREY: I fear it would be impossible to secure by treaty that any part of the territory of a belligerent should not be affected by war. It is to be hoped that this consideration will influence every nation to remain at peace.

Macedonian Reform.

Mr. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government adheres to the declaration of Lord Lansdowne that His Majesty's Government would suggest more drastic measures of reform in Macedonia if those in force should prove inadequate.

Sir EDWARD GREY: This declaration was originally made with special reference to the Murzteg programme, and since then the Financial Commission has been suggested and brought into operation. His Majesty's Government, of course, continue to reserve the right to suggest further reforms, if desirable or practicable.

Mr. G. GREENWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether progress has been made in the reforms entrusted to the civil agents in Macedonia, especially with regard to the courts of justice and the prisons.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The question of financial reform, which underlies all other reforms, is considered most urgent, and the International Commission is now actively engaged on the subject.

Chinese Treaty Port Courts.

Mr. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the practice for British Consuls at Chinese treaty ports and on Chinese concessions to sit as assessors with Chinese magistrates in mixed courts, where persons (other than British subjects) convicted of various offences are sentenced to punishment by flogging and to torture with the cangue; and, if so, whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to permit this practice to continue.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The assessor is there to see that the trial is properly conducted, and it is in the interest of the British community that he should be there, but the prisoners are tried according to Chinese law, and the sentences are given by a Chinese magistrate appointed by the Taotai. I am not prepared to admit the accuracy of the description of the sentences in the Question, but we cannot alter Chinese Law or infringe Chinese jurisdiction.

Mr. H. H. MARKS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the sentences inflicted in these courts require to be approved and sanctioned by the British Consul?

Sir EDWARD GREY: No, Sir, I do not understand that. They are Chinese sentences and the courts are Chinese courts, and we cannot alter them without infringing Chinese jurisdiction.

Jury System.

Mr. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, seeing that the present mode of summoning jurymen results in some being called three or more times, whilst hundreds never have to serve, he can arrange, by legislation or otherwise, that some mark be placed against the name of each person on the list who has once served, and that such persons should not be liable to be again called until every eligible person has been once summoned.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I think that there is ground for dissatisfaction with the present system, but to carry out the hon. Member's proposal appears to me to be impracticable without legislation, and at the present time legislation on the subject cannot be undertaken.

Aliens.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can now state the number of aliens refused permission to land at British ports during the month of February, and the reason for which permission was denied.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I have already stated that fifty alien immigrants did not receive leave to land in the United Kingdom during the month of

February. In thirty-eight cases the reason for refusal was failure to show possession or prospect of sufficient means, and in twelve cases the refusal was based on medical grounds.

Remission of Sentence.

MR. BRUNNER (Lancashire, Leigh): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of William Young, sentenced on the 26th March, at the Leigh borough police court, to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, for having been found in a dwelling house for the purpose of stealing; whether he is aware that Young was convicted upon the uncorroborated evidence of a girl of fourteen, who alleged she was bound to a chair when alone in the house; whether, seeing that nothing was stolen, although articles of value were left about, he has any reports from the police to the effect that a miscarriage of justice has taken place; and whether he will make inquiry with a view to advising His Majesty to grant Young a free pardon.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I received an application on behalf of the prisoner last Friday, and, after reference to the Justices, I felt that there is so much doubt in the case that I have advised the remission of the remainder of the prisoner's sentence and have sent instructions to the prison for his discharge. I will make further inquiry before deciding whether I can advise the grant of a free pardon.

Housing of the Working Classes Act.

MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can make arrangements to send a circular, at an early date, to every parish council, asking them whether they have sufficient housing accommodation in their parishes; and, if not, whether they have made any effort to adopt Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890.

The following Questions also appeared on the Paper on this subject.

MR. BRODIE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can make arrangements to circularise the district councils throughout the country in order to obtain information as to the number of applications they have received from parish councils in their district to put into force Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, and as to the number of instances in which the applications have been granted; and, where such applications have not been granted, on what grounds has it been refused.

MR. BRODIE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his department issue any simple manual which explains the powers of parish and district councils under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, to members of such councils; and, if not, whether he can see his way to have such manual prepared and issued to every member of every parish and district council throughout the kingdom without delay.

MR. BRODIE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can see his way to obtain a Return from the county councils throughout the kingdom, as to the number of applications they have received from district councils to put into force Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, and as to the number of instances in which this application has been granted; and, in cases where it has been refused, the grounds of such refusal.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer together this and the three following Questions standing in the name of my hon. friend. A parish council have no power to adopt Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890. Hence I should not propose to send to them circulars of the kind suggested in the first Question. If my hon. friend will move for a Return of the particulars to which he refers in the last of his Questions, I shall be happy to obtain them. The Return might also include information as to the number of cases in which Resolutions by parish councils under Section 6 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1900, have been reported to the county councils, and as to the action taken upon such Resolutions. This will, I think practically meet the object he has in view in his second Question. In 1900, digests of the chief provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts were issued by the Local Government Board. Copies were sent to the several urban and rural district councils, and they were placed on sale. I could not undertake to send a copy to every member of every parish and district council.

School Fees.

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is the amount of school fees collected from parents for the latest years of which there are complete figures; how much of this was collected in council schools, and how much in aided schools, in the latter, how much was handed over to the manager; what cases, if any, since the appointed day, has the Board of Education been called upon to decide between the local authority and the voluntary managers; and what were the opposing proposals for decision, and the decision of the Board of Education.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): During the statistical year 1904–5 fees amounting to £88,358 12s. 6d. were collected in voluntary schools, and £28,693 8s. 3d. in council schools, making a total of £117,052 0s. 9d. I have no information as to what proportion of the fees collected in voluntary schools were given to the managers. In many cases the fees were abolished in the middle of the school year, consequently these figures do not represent a complete year. In many other cases the fees have been abolished since. In only three cases have the Board had occasion to give a decision, on appeal under the Act, as to the apportionment of fees. Each case was considered in view of the particular circumstances. In each case the managers asked for 50 per cent. of the fees. In two of the cases, namely, the Bury Schools and the Lancaster Wesleyan School, the Board adopted the local authority's proposal to give the managers 20 per cent. and 33 per cent. respectively of the fees. In the case of Swansea National School the local authority proposed to give the managers only 4½ per cent., and the Board, after careful investigation of the circumstances, awarded 40 per cent.

Sunday Opening of Public Galleries.

MR. THORNE: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can explain why the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, and other like institutions are closed to the public on Sundays from the end of October till the beginning of April; and whether it is proposed to continue such closing.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): As the two galleries named are not artificially lighted they could only be opened for a short time on Sundays during the winter. The expense of opening them would be considerable and I think scarcely justifiable in the circumstances.

MR. TREVELYAN: May I ask whether there is any difference in the amount of light on Sundays and week days?

MR. MCKENNA: On Sundays in any event the galleries would only be open from two o'clock in the afternoon.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Will the hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of legislation, if necessary, to provide artificial lighting in these two galleries?

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, Sir; but there are other reasons besides that of cost which enter into the question.

Kilmarnock Post Office.

MR. RAINY (Kilmarnock Burghs): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the accommodation at the present post office at Kilmarnock; and whether, seeing that a new site has been acquired some two years ago, that the lease of the present buildings runs out next year, and that, unless the new buildings for which the plans and estimates are prepared are put in hand shortly, they will not be available till after the lease has run out, he will, to avoid expense that would be incurred in transferring wires to another temporary building, consider the urgency of putting the new buildings in hand without delay.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The need for better accommodation for the business of the post office at Kilmarnock has not been overlooked, and I am making arrangements which will, I hope, render it possible to begin the new building in time to ensure its completion before the lease of the present office runs out.

Dumbarton Post Office.

MR. RAINY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience of the site proposed for a new post office at Dumbarton; whether he is aware that the burgh is spreading rapidly towards the east, and therefore in the direction remote from the proposed site; that for the western district of the burgh inconvenience is caused by the river cutting off direct access; and will he say whether, in estimating the expense involved in securing a proper site, due consideration has been given to the fact that the burgh is commercial and industrial, and is in a condition of rapid expansion.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question of a site for a new post office at Dumbarton has received very careful consideration, and I am now in communication with the local authorities in the hope of securing a site which will meet with the approval of the inhabitants and at the same time will not be unduly costly.

Leitrim Postal Arrangements.

MR. T. SMITH (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if the collection of letters at Aughamore, rural office to Dromod, county Leitrim, which takes place at present about ten o'clock a.m., could be deferred for about four hours, as letters posted after ten o'clock a.m. are not collected until the following morning, and consequently the people in the district are greatly inconvenienced.

I beg also to ask the Postmaster-General if the mail car, which leaves Mohill for Dromod at nine o'clock p.m., could be delayed until nine thirty p.m., as it would be a great convenience to the traders and the general public in Mohill.

I wish further to ask the Postmaster-General if the collection of letters at Rooskey-on-Shannon, sub-office to Dromod, county Leitrim, which takes place on Sunday mornings at ten a.m., could be left over until evening, as was the custom formerly.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have called for a report on these suggestions, and on receipt of the necessary information I will acquaint the hon. Member with my decision.

North Sea Fishery—German Limits.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can state if the delegate of the Scotch Fishery Board to the Committee for Scientific Investigation of the North Sea has promised the assistance of the British Government to enable Germany to extend German prohibitory fishing limits to thirteen miles from the shore, on condition that Germany would respect the Scotch bye-laws, which close certain areas on the coast of Scotland against trawling.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (MR. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The two British delegates to the International Committee receive identical instructions from His Majesty's Government which are adjusted between the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Scottish Office and approved by both Departments. The subject of a thirteen mile limit has never been referred to in any instructions given to the British delegates, nor has it, according to my information, ever been brought up at any meeting of the council. Professor D'Arcy Thompson, whom, as Secretary for Scotland, I nominated as one of the British delegates, has already stated that there is no foundation for this suggestion.

Trawling in Scotch Waters.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if the Government propose to take any steps at an early date with a view to effectively prevent trawling by any trawlers in the Scotch waters prohibited to trawlers under the British flag.

MR. SINCLAIR: Further consideration will be given to this subject after the Court of Appeal has given its decision upon the case which will come before it presently. The hon. Member is referred to my Answer to a Question on March 7th.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 451-2.

Scottish Education Areas.

Mr. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the effect upon education in Scotland of the repeated failure of the late Government to pass their Bills, and of the difference of opinion about areas and rating, he will, in anticipation of promised legislation, consider the appointment of a small boundary Commission, to consider in each district what area or combination, or division of areas, would be most suitable in the interests of primary and secondary education, having regard to travelling facilities and financial arrangements.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The question of area will depend largely upon the general principles upon which the Bill proceeds, and it would be premature to consider the institution of any such inquiry as that proposed till the general principles of a Bill have been determined.

Irish Estates in Chancery.

Mr. GINNEL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware of the fact that, on estates under the control of the Court of Chancery, tenants in actual occupation of holdings in immediate and unbroken succession to several generations of similiar tenants of the same holdings, have been compelled, by orders purporting to be those of the Court of Chancery, to sign proposals for leases, and that this signing has afterwards been held to bar the rights which tenants would otherwise have possessed to get judicial rents fixed; will he state what statutory authority, if any, there is for this barring; and will His Majesty's Government open the Land Courts to tenants so circumstanced.

*The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave to his similar Question on March 26th.†

Testimonials to Irish Policemen.

Mr. HAZLETON (Galway, N): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the proportions which the practice of presenting testimonials to policemen in country towns and districts throughout Ireland, on their removal from one station to another, has assumed, he will have instructions issued that, in future, members of the police force in Ireland will be forbidden to receive such testimonials.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are prohibited by the regulations from accepting any testimonial or presentation without the previous authority of the Inspector-General. The suggestion that the number of such presentations is increasing does not appear to be well founded. I am informed that the number of presentations authorised to be received in 1905, was fifteen as compared with sixteen in 1885. I do not think there is any present necessity for the issue of the prohibition suggested by the Question.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S): Is it not the fact that these testimonials are very frequently promoted by publicans who have a desire to sell during prohibited hours?

Mr. BRYCE: If that is so, it is contrary to the spirit and letter of the law, and in any case of that kind permission would certainly be refused.

Irish Valuation.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that no general valuation of Ireland has been made for half a century, and that untenanted and non-residential land, comprising the most fertile land in Ireland, is much under-valued, and consequently does not bear its due proportion of rates and taxes; and whether he will consider the advisability of having this land re-valued now or, pending actual valuation, will the prices demanded by its owners be taken as the basis for calculating the public burdens which should properly be imposed upon it.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that there has been no change in the rateable valuation of agricultural land in Ireland which was made over forty years ago. Untenanted and non-residential lands were then valued on exactly the same basis as tenanted land of equal agricultural value. The Select Committee on the Irish Valuation Acts reported in 1904 that it would be inexpedient to attempt any alteration in the valuation of agricultural land in Ireland so long as the present land purchase operations are in progress.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv, 876–7.

Direct Labour in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board will sanction the direct labour scheme adapted by the Clare County Council.

MR. BRYCE: The inquiry directed by the Local Government Board in this case was only recently held, and when the Board have arrived at a decision upon their Inspector's report I shall be prepared to answer the hon. Member's Question.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that wherever direct labour has been tried it has been a success? Why should the Government, in view of that fact, stand in its way?

[The Answer was inaudible.]

Colonel Smythe's Weastmeath Tenants.

MR. GINNEL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that Colonel Smythe, of Gaybrook, Weastmeath, on his tenants refusing to purchase their holdings at twenty years purchase in a district in which seventeen years purchase has been the average under former Acts, has recovered by legal process all the money they possessed and seized their cattle, horses, and other property for the balance; if the Estates Commissioners will in their legal discretion disallow agreements signed under duress of this character; and if this conduct will be brought under the notice of the Lord-Chancellor with a view to depriving Colonel Smythe of the commission of the peace.

MR. BRYCE: I have no information as to the proceedings which this landlord may have taken to recover rent. I have already informed the hon. Member that if proceedings for the sale of this property should come before the Estates Commissioners, they will, before sanctioning any advance, make such inquiry into the circumstances of the case as may be within their province as defined by law. The Answer to the concluding part of the Question is in the negative.

Irish Arterial Drainage.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the question of arterial drainage in Ireland have yet concluded their investigations; and, if so, can he say when their Report may be expected.

MR. BRYCE: I have already stated that the Report of the Commission is not expected until towards the close of the present year.

Drumdoe Shooting Affray.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an inquiry has been held into the circumstances of the alleged shooting affray at Drumdoe, near Boyle, county Roscommon, at the residence of Mr. M'Guinness; whether he will state by whom and under what authority this inquiry was held, on what funds the expense of this inquiry was charged, and the amount of same; what were the findings of the gentlemen holding the inquiry; and whether he will issue as a Parliamentary Paper the Minutes of Evidence and Report of same.

MR. BRYCE: The inquiry referred to was held under the authority of the Irish Government, in the time of my predecessors, by Messrs. Denis Henry, K.C., and J. H. Swiney, C.E. The expenses of the inquiry will be defrayed from the Vote for the Royal Irish Constabulary. The amount has not yet been ascertained. The Report can be given as a Parliamentary Paper if moved for, but the Minutes of Evidence are so voluminous that I do not think the heavy expense of printing them ought to be incurred.

Kilkenny Evicted Tenants.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the slowness of the procedure by which the evicted tenants in the county Kilkenny are being restored to their holdings, he could advise the Estates Commissioners to increase their offer for the Scully Estate, at Tullarvan, which comprises 1,300 acres of untenanted land, with a view to restore them to equivalent holdings.

MR. BRYCE: Any question as to the price which the Estates Commissioners may be prepared to offer for a particular estate is obviously one for their own determination, and it is not within the province of the Government to advise them in the matter. They are fully alive to the desirability of using the powers they possess in this branch of their work.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): May I ask whether, as the landlords of Ireland who hold untenanted lands are refusing offers made by the Estate Commissioner, the right hon. Gentleman will state the prices which are refused?

MR. BRYCE: I am afraid that would be extremely difficult. It is not generally the case that they are refusing to sell untenanted lands, because in many instances they have sold.

MR. MEAGHER: What terms did Mr. Scully refuse?

MR. BRYCE: I have no information.

Mountmellick Estate.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether seeing that all the untenanted land on the Adair, Mountmellick estate, has been disposed of, and the other portion of the estate sold to the tenants, he can say what steps the Estates Commissioners propose taking to provide a holding for Thomas Flanagan, Clonaghadoe, who was evicted from a farm on the estate in 1884, and whose holding is in the occupation of a planter.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners will consider Flanagan's application in the event of their acquiring untenanted land in the neighbourhood.

Irish Teachers' Capitation Grants.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the capitation grants, due to Irish national teachers on January 1st last, have not yet been paid; and will he take steps to secure that those grants shall in future be paid to the teachers as soon as possible after they become due.

MR. BRYCE: It is presumed that the hon. Member refers to the residual capitation grant, under the Irish Education Act of 1892, which, as I am informed, is now in process of being paid. In regard to the question of expediting these payments in future years, I beg to refer to my reply in a similar Question on March 5th.†

The Birmingham Estate, Roscommon.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners have purchased the lands in Roscommon known as the Birmingham Estate, of which a considerable portion is untenanted land; that offers have been made to several of the tenants of additional plots of land, the prices fixed, and provisional agreements signed, and that recently an inspector from the Estates Commissioners visited the estate, and informed these tenants that they would not get the land mentioned in these agreements, or any of the land; will he state what is the name of this inspector, and had he authority for making this statement; whether a large portion of the untenanted land remains with a representative of the owners, who are non-residential; and, if so, whether he will explain why this portion has been kept out of the sale; and whether, before there is any distribution of the untenanted land, regard will be had for the claims of occupiers of small holdings on this estate.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the estate referred to comprises 274 acres, of which 179 acres are being purchased by the Land Commission. The owner proposes to retain for his own use the balance of ninety-five acres on which there is a house, and the Commissioners regard this arrangement as quite reasonable. As to the selection of purchasers, the Commissioners considered that the original scheme for the re-sale of the untenanted land was an unsuitable one, and they have therefore made another arrangement, but they do not consider that they are called on in individual cases to explain the selection of purchasers made in the exercise of the discretion vested in them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 55.

Irish Poor Law Commission Report.

MR. T. SMYTH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Report of the Poor Law Commission will be published.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Chairman of the Commission that he hopes to be in a position to present the Report of the Commission to the Lord-Lieutenant before the end of this month.

Future Tenants in Ireland.

MR. T. SMYTH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government contemplate amending the Land Acts as regards future tenancies in Ireland; and, seeing that there are 30,000 future tenants in Ireland who are deprived of the benefits of the Land Acts as regards fixity of tenure and the fixing of fair rents, will anything be done on their behalf.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the Answer given by my right hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General for Ireland to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for North Westmeath on March 7th.† I am not prepared, in reply to a Question, to discuss the possibility of legislation in regard to future tenants.

North Fermanagh Election Fights.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a young man named John Ovens was, on the 22nd January last, assaulted and had his jaw broken by a man who gave as his reason for the assault that Ovens had taken part in local rejoicings at the result of a recent election in North Fermanagh, and that he was, on the 2nd March, again seriously assaulted by two men for the same avowed reason; and will he say why, and by whose orders, the police, although shown by Ovens the injuries he sustained, refused to take any action; whether he is aware John Ovens also received a letter threatening him with death for the same avowed reason; and will he say whether any persons have been made amenable or received any punishment for these outrages; and if it is proposed to afford Ovens police protection, or what action he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that on the 13th March summonses at the suit of John Ovens, junior, against three men for assault were heard at Belleek Petty Sessions. Two of the men were fined 10s. 6d. and 10s. respectively, and the case against the third was dismissed. The police did not witness the assaults, and their power to prosecute arises only when the person aggrieved declines or refuses to do so. It is the fact that three days after the first assault Ovens showed the local police a black eye which he had received. He made no complaint of having received other injuries, and expressed the intention of himself prosecuting his assailant. John Ovens, senior, reported to the police that he received a threatening letter on the 24th January. The police authorities do not consider it necessary to afford special police protection to Ovens.

Irish Teachers Salaries.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has made any representations to the National Board of Education for Ireland with a view to having the salaries of Irish national teachers paid monthly; and can he say when this reform is likely to be carried into effect.

*MR. BRYCE: I have been in communication with the Commissioners of National Education upon this subject. I am informed by the Commissioners that even the quarterly payment of the teachers' salaries involves a great amount of labour, and that it would be quite impossible to make monthly payments without immensly adding to this labour and very largely increasing the staff. In these circumstances I am afraid that effect cannot be given to the wish expressed in the Question.

MR. SLOAN: Would it mean doubling the staff? Can you give an idea of the cost?

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 452.

*Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir; but it would mean a great increase of staff.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth N.): What is the practice in England and Scotland?

*Mr. BRYCE: In those countries the salaries are paid by the local authorities.

Mr. SLOAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiry?

*Mr. BRYCE: The matter rests with the Commissioners of National Education, and I doubt whether they will consider it desirable to increase the enormous expense involved.

Reenard Pier.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state the result of his inquiries into the claim for the construction of a pier at Reenard, near Cahirciveen, under the powers given by the Marine Works Act; and whether the Great Southern and Western Railway Company has been again approached on the subject of contribution towards this necessary work.

Mr. BRYCE: I am not in a position to add anything to the statement which I made in the debate on the Irish Fisheries a short time ago.† The question of the construction of works at Reenard will require careful consideration in conjunction with the claims of other localities. I have not lost sight of the matter, but do not anticipate that it will be possible to decide it for some little time to come, particularly as it is not yet known how much money will remain available under the Marine Works Act. The Railway Company has not yet been approached anew. Their last reply was not favourable, but the matter is of so much importance that it may be found desirable to approach them again.

Kerry Technical Instruction Committee.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Technical Instruction Committee of the Kerry County Council have on three occasions unanimously voted a sum of £80 as a grant towards the equipment of the hosiery and lace industry at the Cahirciveen convent, but the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction has refused to sanction the grant on the ground that the capitation grant was sufficient; can he state why the Department is thus allowed to interfere with the grant of money raised by a county rate; and whether, in view of the fact that for three years in succession this county committee has unanimously voted this sum, he will direct that no further interference on the part of the Department will be permitted.

*Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that the facts are as stated in the Question, the ground of the Department's refusal to sanction the grant being that they considered that adequate aid was afforded to the school by the capitation grant of £2 per pupil payable under the county council's scheme of technical instruction. The responsibility of the Department in regard to such proposals is laid down by Section 19 of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, which provides that no money shall be applied out of the rates except in accordance with the provisions of a scheme approved by the Department.

Tynagh Agrarian Outrage.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to an occurrence which has taken place at Pallas, Tynagh, county Galway, on the night of the 18th March, when a hayrick, the property of Bernard Ryan, secretary to the Tynagh branch of the United Irish League, was burned; whether he is aware that this hayrick was a portion of the property seized by the sheriff under judgment obtained by Lord Westmeath against his sub-agent or bailiff, Thomas Moran, for the sum of £600; can he say whether the sheriff sold this hay in Thomas Moran's hay yard by auction on the 16th instant, where it was burned; whether at the sale Moran's son remonstrated with Ryan for bidding for the hay; whether Ryan replied that he would exercise his legal rights and buy anything he chose; whether Bernard Ryan is the same person who was arrested last year and charged with intimidating certain persons by writing a letter to graziers who had taken grassland on the eleven-months system; whether Moran was one of the eleven-months men said to be intimidated; how much land did he so hold; whether the judgment obtained against Moran was for rent due by himself or for moneys paid by tenants on the Westmeath property for hay and grazing; can he say what action has been taken by the police; whether, in their opinion, the burning was accidental or malicious; and whether they hope to make the perpetrator amenable to justice.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1210.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that the facts are generally as stated in the Question, with the following exceptions. Moran's son was not present at the auction. Moran was one of the so-called eleven-months men, but not one said to be intimidated. He held 200 acres of grazing land, and the writ obtained against him was for the rent of this land. The police have investigated the matter, but have not yet arrested any one. There is not yet evidence to show whether the burning was malicious or not.

Irish Prison Service.

MR. MCKILLOP (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the salaries of warders, chief warders, and clerks in the Irish prison service and also those of similar ranks in England.

*MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Estimates for the prisons services in England and Ireland, in which he will find the particulars asked for. The figures are too long to be capable of being easily stated or followed in the form of an oral Answer to a Question.

Townsend's Blenish Island Estate.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if the Estates Commissioners received a request for reinstatement from Mrs. Rose Bailie, representative of the late William Bailie, who was a tenant of Frederick Townsend on his estate at Blenish Island, Newtown Butler, county Fermanagh; and whether, seeing that the agent of the estate demanded possession of the holding on the 18th April, 1896, having previously served an eviction notice, he will say what steps have been taken to reinstate Mrs. Bailie, and what action have the Estates Commissioners taken in the matter.

*MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received an application for reinstatement from Mrs. Bailey, who is at present residing in Scotland, and whose former holding is in the occupation of another person. No proceedings for the sale of the estate are pending before the Commissioners, and they have not yet taken any action upon Mrs. Bailey's application.

Crookenden and Casey Estate, County Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the Crookenden and Casey, formerly Morley, estate, county Cavan, have received an abatement of 6s. 8d. in the pound on their rents since The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881; that this estate is now owned by a syndicate which has withdrawn the abatement and sued in the superior and county courts for full rents and obtained judgments with costs; and will he cause an immediate sitting of the Land Commission, and thus enable these tenants, who have notices served, to have their fair rents fixed.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that they have no information in regard to the matters of fact alleged in the Question. As regards the final inquiry, the Land Commission inform me that there are but eleven fair rent applications from this estate undisposed of, all of which have been lodged within the past six months. These cases will appear upon the next list for hearing in the district of Enniskillen, but it is not at present possible to fix the date. I have no power to cause them to hold an immediate sitting as suggested.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Seeing that this estate has been refused by the Estates Commissioners and that the difficulty has arisen because the Commissioners will not treat it as an estate, will the right hon. Gentleman order the Commissioners to further investigate the matter?

MR. BRYCE: I have no power to do that.

Land Act Administration in County Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Estates Commissioners have put Section 66 of The Irish Land Act, 1903, in operation in county Cavan; on how many estates have purchase advances been sanctioned; and will he say if the Commissioners have made inquiries as to whether accommodation is needed for labourers on the said estates.

MR. BRYCE: It is assumed that the hon. Member refers to Section 96 of the Act. The Estates Commissioners inform me that up to March 31st, 1906, advances for the purchase of holdings on fourteen estates in county Cavan were sanctioned. In each case inquiries were made as to whether accommodation for labourers was needed, and the Commissioners were satisfied that such accommodation was not required on any of the estates, and therefore, no representations under Section 96 were issued.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in the attachment proceedings for contempt of court under which Messrs T. J. Smith, J.P., Terence Fitzpatrick, and Joseph Mulligan are at present confined in Dundalk Prison during His Majesty's pleasure, a Report was furnished by the receiver to the court; were there any other communications; and, if so, will these documents be produced.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Registrar of the Land Judge's Court that the receiver in this matter made an application to the learned Judge for directions founded on a Report received on 20th February. The Judge, however, refused to consider the matter except upon notice to the persons affected grounded on affidavit. The registrar adds that Reports of the character mentioned are confidential and cannot be published.

South African Committee.

MR. LANE FOX: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury who has been appointed Secretary to the South African Commission.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The Secretary to the South African Committee will be Major Barnett D.S.O., of the North Staffordshire Regiment. Major Barnett is now, and has for some time been, in South Africa. He is well acquainted with the country and with the Dutch language, and he has been strongly recommended by Lord Selborne for the post.

Education Bill.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to fix the date for the introduction of the Education Bill.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say positively.

MR. ASHLEY: Will it be before Easter?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANEERMAN: We have already said that we hope so.

Sir Horace Plunkett.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, what is the salary of Sir Horace Plunkett, what is the designation of his present office, and what is the patronage at his disposal; is he a Minister of the Crown or a Civil Servant; and when are his services likely to be dispensed with.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A similar Question from the hon. Gentleman was answered very fully by my right hon. friend, the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the 21st of February.† The salary of Sir Horace Plunkett is £1,350. The designation of his office is Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland. He has no patronage at his disposal beyond that of the appointment of his private secretary, the patronage being vested in the Department itself, of which my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary is President. Sir Horace Plunkett is not a Minister of the Crown, nor is he an ordinary Civil Servant. His position is defined by the Act creating the Department. The Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Department has now been appointed and will begin work at once.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 351–5.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that Sir Horace Plunkett's retention of his post even for an hour was distasteful to the people of Ireland.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said Sir Horace Plunkett agreed to continue in office because it would not have been possible or convenient pending the inquiry referred to to make a fresh appointment.

Sea Erosion.

MR. H. H. MARKS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state when it is proposed to appoint the Royal Commission to inquire into the defence of the coast from sea erosion, and other kindred subjects.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, I am not in a position to make any announcement at present.

Prime Minister's Private Secretary.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if there is any precedent for the payment of a salary of £500 a year to the private secretary of the First Lord of the Treasury; and whether, seeing that the salary paid to the officials who served the late Lord Salisbury and the late Prime Minister did not exceed £400 a year, he will explain this enhanced renumeration.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A salary of £500 a year was paid to one of the private secretaries of Mr. Disraeli when he was First Lord of the Treasury. The duties of this arduous and responsible position have considerably increased since that time, and a return to the former salary appears to be fully justified.

MR. HUNT: Is this considered economy?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I consider it the truest economy to pay men well for their services.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—EASTER HOLIDAYS.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) asked what Supply was proposed to be taken on Thursday, and hoped it was not premature to ask for information as to the holiday arrangements for Easter.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has been a source of astonishment to me for some days past that that Question has not been asked before; it has been so different from usual experience. We propose that the House shall rise on Wednesday at the close of the afternoon sitting until the Tuesday week. I think that will be the usual length. To-morrow we propose to take the Workmen's Compensation Bill, and on Thursday, in compliance with a request from the other side of the House, we propose to put down the Colonial Vote.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Might not the Second Reading of the Government Trade Disputes Bill be the first business upon the re-assembling of the House after the holidays.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That shall be considered; the business has not yet been arranged.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked if on the Colonial Vote the question of remuneration for the South Africa Committee could be discussed.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think everything connected with the Colonies can be discussed on the Colonial Vote.

EDUCATION BILL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): When will the Leader of the House be able to state the date for the introduction of the Education Bill?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think I shall be able to say to-morrow when the Education Bill will be introduced.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection;

That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Kearley and Mr. Runciman; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Bennett, Mr. Edward Dunn, Mr. Charles Nicholson, and Mr. Essex.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Mr. James Stuart; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Leif Jones.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed, [No. 107.]

Bill, as amended, (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144.]

NEW MEMBER MADE THE AFFIRMATION REQUIRED BY LAW.

Franklin Thomasson, esquire, for the Parliamentary Borough of Leicester.

NEW BILL.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (ELECTION OF ALDERMEN) BILL.

"To amend The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, as to Election of Aldermen," presented by Mr. Barran; supported by Mr. Armitage, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. J. W. Benn, Mr. Toulmin, Sir Charles McLaren, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 145.]

STREET BETTING.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.) asked leave to introduce a Bill "to prohibit street betting and for other purposes relating thereto. He said that the Bill was in response to a suggestion thrown out by the Home Secretary. A few days ago, in addressing the deputation which waited upon him to urge on the Government the importance of legislation on the subject of street betting, the right hon. Gentleman suggested that a private Member should introduce a Bill on certain lines; and he threw out a hint that possibly the Government might be induced to offer facilities for passing such a measure during this session. The Home Secretary suggested that the Bill should proceed on the lines of what was known as Lord Davey's Bill, which came direct to this House last Parliament from another place, and which proposed to suppress betting in streets and other public places. The Bill which he asked leave to introduce was, he ventured most respectfully to say, a considerable improvement upon that measure, apart from the absence of ambiguity of phraseology calculated to give rise to litigation. It did not give what Lord Davey's Bill proposed to give, the right to a police constable to arrest anybody in the public street if he thought he might be engaged in a betting transaction. That was, he submitted, a provision contrary to the whole system and principle of our law. It provided, however, for the prosecution of offenders by summons in the ordinary way and for the imposition of severe penalties, etc. On the other hand, his Bill proposed to make it an offence for a bookmaker to enter into any betting transaction with a person apparently of less age than twenty-one years, instead of sixteen years as proposed by Lord Davey's Bill. It would not, however, perpetrate the idea of throwing the circumstances of proving age upon the definition, but would give him the same benefit as other Acts of Parliament of proving that he had good ground for believing the person betting was not under age. Shortly stated, so far as street betting was concerned, his Bill was in substantial accord with that of Lord Davey, although he would not consider, when they had driven the bookmaker from the kerbstone, that they had stamped out the evil. In his view, if street betting were suppressed, it would tend to increase the danger of betting in workshops, factories, and other places, and would also bring about a system under which bookmakers would have agents in every workshop, and possibly breed a large army of amateur bookmakers in those workshops themselves. The evil would thus be greater. His Bill, in a sentence, proposed to deal with the question of street betting by providing that every person engaged in the business of bookmakers should have a registered address, be licensed, be under strict police supervision, and be liable to very heavy penalties for any breach of the Act, including imprisonment for betting with minors. He would be obliged to apply to the Justices in Petty Sessions every year for a certificate before he was entitled to take out his licence. He was aware that many people objected to any kind of recognition of betting, but he thought the State should recognise what it had not the courage to prohibit; and so long as street betting was not illegal, he submitted it was desirable that regulations should be made to minimise its evil to the greatest extent. The Bill proceeded on the assumption that gambling was inherent in human nature. They were all gamblers, even, if he might say so, the average M.P. In some form or other every European State had had the sense to recognise the fact and had derived considerable revenue from it. Perhaps, later on, that was an example which might or might not be followed in this country. It might be a folly, but it was not a crime. There was no Biblical injunction against it, and eminent divines were divided in opinion as to its criminality. Life and Fire Insurance offices were betting offices. The Bill assumed that working-men would have some excitement to relieve the humdrum and monotony of their lives. Some flew to street betting, some to street preaching, and some to drinking. The popular idea that a bookmaker was a being who sprang up and took advantage of the innocent customer was one which had no foundation. The Bill was opposed to class legislation; it treated the working-man as a human being, and not as a beast of burden. It was opposed to the complacent attitude which said that they had got rid of an evil when they had driven it indoors, and it suggested that by bringing the bookmaker under the ægis of the law they were doing their best to limit the evil of betting and to keep it out of the workshops and factories. With these observations, he begged leave to introduce the Bill, and, knowing that the House would reserve to itself the fullest power to amend the details of the Bill, he rerespectfully asked that it should be read a first time.

STREET BETTING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to prohibit Street Betting; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Bottomley.*)

*MR. SHACKLETON said that the hon. Member had presumably introduced the Bill in the interests of the working-man, but he should like to know whence the hon. Member got his power to speak for the working man? As one claiming some right to speak for a number of working-men belonging to various organisations up and down country, he (Mr. Shackleton) was inclined to say that their unanimous desire on this matter would be dead against the Bill. They wanted no legalising of street betting, and the fact that the hon. Member had said that it would legalise street betting condemned it in their eyes. They wanted more stringent measures to put it down and not to legalise it; and he suggested that the hon. Member for South Hackney before he claimed to speak for the working-man, should at least consult the representatives of those large organisations who had considered the matter from time to time. He desired to express his strong disapproval of any effort of this kind, and he trusted the House would refuse to allow the Bill to be considered any further, and would vote it out at the first opportunity.

And, the Motion being opposed, Mr SPEAKER put the Question in pursuance of Standing Order No. 11.

Question negatived.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the consideration of the existing Standing Orders with proposed Amendments, if under discussion on the interruption of Business at this Afternoon's Sitting, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business at this Evening's Sitting."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 335 ; Noes, 64. (Division List No. 42).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Alexander Wm. (Banff)
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James (Aberdeen
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Sir Wm. J (S. Pancras, W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. H. John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, J. (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans'a
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.

MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell Philip
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
O Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, Willam (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, J.Wynford(Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford,E.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mp'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, SirGScott(Bradford
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton-und.-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward, W.Dudley(Southampt'n
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, JohnCathcart (Orkney)
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.(Elgin & Nairn)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord(NorfolkMid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, SirJ.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES

Ashley W. W
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael HughHicks
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn. Victor C. W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbet, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope G. Loyd
Craig Charles Curtis(Antrim,S
Craig, Capt.James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Gov'n
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, W.)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F.W.F(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, ArthurH. (Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Co. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col.CharlesW. (Evesham)
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter (Dublin S)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert

Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed [2nd April] to Standing Order No. 1 (Sittings of the House).

Which Amendment was—

"In paragraph (5) line 1, instead of the words last omitted, to insert the words 'eleven and.'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order further amended in paragraph (5), line 2, by leaving out the words "and after the business under consideration at half-past Seven of the clock has been disposed of, no other business shall be taken."

In paragraph (7), line 4, by leaving out the word "twelve," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

Amendment proposed—

In paragraph (7), lines 6 and 7, to leave out "on the interruption of business at this afternoon's sitting," and insert "when the business is postponed."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) asked whether the House was not in a rather peculiar position with regard to this matter at the present moment. The Procedure Committee dealt with the question of a temporary suspension in two ways. They suggested that the House should return to the old system of whole day sittings, and also to the old practice of having a short informal suspension of business during the middle of that sitting. They also recommended that the practice of a suspension in the morning sitting should be given up. Therefore the Committee made two suggestions—one that the House should go back to the old arrangement, and the other that they should give up the present arrangement. Yesterday the Prime Minister said that it was intended to be a continuous sitting. Though there was no Standing Order dealing with this particular question, he considered it was desirable that the House should be given an opportunity of discussing the question of the temporary suspension of business, and also that the House should know definitely what was going to be the practice of the House when they met again under the new rules. The Prime Minister had given one opinion and the Committee on Procedure another, but it should be remembered that the question of a temporary suspension of business lay with neither the Committee on Procedure nor the Leader of the House. It had always been left entirely to the initiative of the Speaker or the Chairman, and it still lay with the occupant of the Chair. But he thought it was desirable before they proceeded further that they should know definitely what was to be the future practice on this matter, and he hoped the House would remember that there were grounds why the Committee made the suggestions they did. In a long sitting it was desirable that there should be a short interval during which the House could be thoroughly aired, and in which the rubbish which had accumulated could be removed. It was not only to the advantage of the occupant of the Chair and the officials, but to the advantage of Members that they should have a short time free from occupation in which to collect their thoughts and take a little sustenance. The advantages of the interval had been acknowledged for a great number of years, and he had never heard any objection in the past. He raised this question now before the Committee on Procedure passed on to the consideration of other rules, so that the opinion of the Government and the House might be definitely known.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the hon. Gentleman had left out of consideration the fact that the Chairman of Ways and Means now took the place of Mr. Speaker, in the latter's absence, and the Deputy-Chairman of Ways and Means was a second relief. When there was only one Member of the House to take the chair, there was reason for the interval, but there was none now, he thought. In the proceedings of the Committee on Procedure, this question was put to Mr. Speaker, who said that he saw no necessity now for the suspension. He had been informed that the ventilation of the House was now so managed that every particle of air in the House was changed every six minutes, and upon occasion that could be accelerated to four minutes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he thought it was hardly necessary to go any further in the matter. This proposal was against the recommendation of the Committee, because the Report stated that there should be no suspension with regard to Friday. Mr. Speaker's evidence was against there being any break at all in the sittings, and there was no difficulty about the officials, because they worked in duplicate. In view of that statement coming from the persons most concerned, there ought not to be any alteration in what he thought was the general view of the Committee, that there should be no formal suspension of the sittings. The abolition of the dinner interval would effect a great saving of time.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) contended that to go on continuously for eight hours must be a great hardship upon the Minister in charge of a Bill, and also upon a great many hon. Members who wished to follow any subject before the House without any break whatever. He did not know of any other assembly of a business character that would think of sitting for eight hours without a break. It was physically impossible for them to do so and at the same time bring their best powers to bear upon any question before the House. The idea to him seemed to be perfectly childish. He hoped the Prime Minister would reconsider this question, because a break of half an hour was not much to ask for.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said the difficulty about the Minister in charge of an important Bill was a very strong argument in favour of the interval which they were asking for. The Committee was almost unanimous upon this point, notwithstanding Mr. Speaker's opinion to the contrary.

Question put, and negatived.

Question, "That the words, 'when the business is postponed' be inserted," put and agreed to."

Words inserted accordingly.

Standing Order further amended, in Paragraph (7), line 8, by leaving out the words, "at this evening's sitting."—*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*

Amendment proposed—

"In Paragraph (8), line 4, to leave out 'twelve' and insert 'eleven.'"—*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*

Question proposed, "That the word 'twelve' stand part of the Standing Order."

*MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) opposed this proposal. It was a fact that the Members of this House took practically no interest in Irish legislation, and if the House sat only up to eleven o'clock their prospects of getting adequate time for the discussion of Irish Bills would practically disappear. It was a very serious thing that in a new Parliament hon. Members without any experience were being asked to pronounce upon this most important question. At present the time they got for the consideration of Irish questions was very small. He knew that amongst his own Party he stood practically alone in thinking that eleven o'clock was a bad system, but if they looked at the Statute Book they would find that not one single measure of any proportion had been passed except after a prolonged discussion after midnight. One or other of two things would happen. He ventured to say that this eleven o'clock rule would have to be suspended two or three or four times each week. This was simply a Tory dodge, and here they had a great democratic Parliament allowing itself to be shackled in the interests of Toryism. The House was now being asked to tie its hands in the interests of Toryism, because Tories wanted no legislation at all, for they were quite satisfied with things as they were. In the interests of some sort of an idea that had grown up about an eight hours' day it was now proposed to reverse the system under which great measures had been passed, and the First Lord of the Treasury, whose instincts were so sound—and the more he listened to him the more he liked his old-fashioned style of talking—by yielding to this clamour for an early closing of the sitting was acting in a manner which he did not believe he had at heart, and he believed that experience would prove that this notion was entirely illusory.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he fully recognised the point of view of his hon. and learned friend. But his hon. and learned friend had not been quite so constantly in the House during the last few sessions; and he was afraid he was getting a little old-fashioned in regard to the House.

*MR. T. M. HEALY: I have been taking the rest cure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that what he wished to point out was that this question had already been decided by the House, and that the Amendment they were now considering was merely consequential and in order to embody what had already been settled.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he believed the proper way to get more time would be to meet earlier in the day.

Question put and agreed to.

Question, "That 'eleven' be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Word inserted accordingly.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (9), line 1, by inserting after the word "chairman," the words "or deputy-chairman." — (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Duration of Friday Sittings.

Standing Order No. 2 read, as followeth:—

The House shall meet every Friday, at twelve o'clock at noon, for private business, petitions, Orders of the day, and notices of Motions, and shall continue to sit until six o'clock, unless previously adjourned.

And amended in line 3, by leaving out the word "six," and inserting the words "half-past five." — (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Termination of Fridays Sittings.

Standing Order No. 3 read, as followeth:—

When such business has been disposed of, or at six o'clock precisely, notwithstanding there may be business under discussion, Mr. Speaker shall adjourn the House without putting any Question.

And amended in line 1, by leaving out the word "six," and inserting the words "half-past five."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Arrangement of Public Business.

Standing Order No. 4 read as followeth:—

Unless the House otherwise direct—(a.) Government business shall have precedence at every sitting except the evening sittings on Tuesday and Wednesday and the sitting on Friday; (b.) At the evening sittings of Tuesday and Wednesday notices of Motion and public Bills, other than government Bills, shall have precedence of government business; (c.) After Easter government business shall have precedence at the evening sittings of Tuesday; (d.) After Whitsuntide, until Michaelmas, government business shall have precedence at all evening sittings, and at all Friday sittings except the sittings on the third and fourth Fridays after Whit Sunday; (e.) At the evening sittings at which government business has not precedence notices of Motion shall have precedence of the Orders of the day; (f.) At all afternoon sittings the House will first proceed with petitions, Motions for unopposed Returns, and leave of absence to Members, giving notices of Motions, and unopposed private business.

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph (a), line 2, to leave out the words 'the evening sittings,' and insert the words 'after half-past eight,'—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words 'the evening sittings,' stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) thought this would be a convenient time to ask the Government what was their intention as to the arrangement of business to be taken after what was formerly known as the adjournment—Motions for the adjournment of the House and Private Members' Motions. Were these Motions to be taken at half-past eight? If so, that would give only two and a half hours for a very important debate on a Motion for the adjournment such as they might have at any time. There was no longer to be any interruption of business, and it was worth while considering now whether they should make the evening business begin at eight or half-past eight. The important thing really was to know when the new business would begin, because there were technicalities and difficulties which every old Member, and certainly every Minister, would understand why they should know when the new business was to come on.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he had given notice of an Amendment which raised the point referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. His proposal was that the evening business should begin at eight o'clock. Half-past eight was recommended by the Committee because it recommended at the same time that the House should sit till half-past eleven, but the House decided yesterday to close the debate at eleven. That would reduce the time available for private Members' Motions to two and a half hours. He thought, therefore, they should agree to commence the evening business at eight, so as to give private Members the full three hours they had now. He begged to move "to leave out 'half-past' in paragraph (*a*), line 2."

*Mr. SPEAKER: I will put the Amendment of the hon. Member after the words in the present Standing Order are left out.

Mr. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) said there might be a subject under discussion which would require the closure to be moved, and if that Motion were proposed about half-past eight it might easily be half-past nine before the private Members' Motion could be taken.

Sir FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said that if the Deputy Speaker was to take the Chair in the Speaker's absence the transference would take a little time, and it appeared to him that eight o'clock would be a convenient hour for making the transference. If they were to adjourn at eight they would have time to get something to eat and to have the House ventilated. He asked the Prime Minister whether he could not see his way to have an adjournment from eight to half-past eight.

*Mr. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) said it would be desirable if some arrangement or understanding could be arrived at with reference to the closuring of a debate in order that the commencement of private business might not be driven back beyond the hour at which it was supposed to begin. When there was to be no interval whatever between the end of public business and the beginning of private business, it was difficult to see how the question of the closure could be adequately dealt with. There was real danger of private business being seriously hindered for a time by the invocation of the closure, which occasionally might necessitate as many as four divisions. He hoped the Prime Minister would tell the House what he had in view with reference to that.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the way to meet the difficulty would be to invoke the closure at an earlier hour. As to the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Edgbaston division, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker were not supposed to change places at a definite hour. It might be any time from six to nine, according as the Speaker felt inclined, or possibly according to the state of business before the House. He did not see his way to move from the hour of half-past eight which he proposed. To do so would take another half hour from the public, or what was sometimes called the Government, time for the general legislation of the session. Although he regretted that private Members might have a somewhat shorter time than they had now, yet it was very much for the convenience of private Members that an hour had been cut off in the evening. No doubt the most important case was that referred to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to the moving of the Adjournment of the House. Even then a question which would give legitimate rise to a Motion for Adjournment was usually, if he might say so, a question in a boiling condition, and he thought that, generally speaking, two and a half hours would be found to exhaust the desire of the House to discuss even a Motion of that kind.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY pointed out that as the time was now allocated between the Government and private Members, the proposal before the House would have the effect of reducing the time for the discussion of private Members' business. He therefore pleaded that the question ought to be further considered. When the private Members accepted two evenings they gave up a whole day, and therefore this was not so much a question of bargaining as of the keeping of a contract.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) said that if they were to make the hour half-past eight there would in future be a quarter of an hour more time for Government business. The extra quarter of an hour would be taken out of private Members' time, and possibly the right hon. Gentleman might make a compromise by which private Members' business should begin at quarter-past eight.

Question put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the words 'after half-past eight,' be there inserted."

MR. W. REDMOND appealed to the Prime Minister to accept his suggested Amendment to substitute eight o'clock for half-past eight. All the Members of every Party in the House—the Government Party, the Unionist, the Labour Party and the Irish Party—were unanimous in their desire that there should be no curtailment of private Members' time; and to take away this quarter of an hour from private Members' time would make a great change. They had now only three hours twice a week, and that time would be reduced by the proposed new rule to two and a half hours. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

'To leave out the words 'half-past.'"—(*Sir William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he did not want to be too stiff. He was always an advocate for the course which was taken by a wise king in old days, of splitting the difference. The hon. Member opposite had made a proposal which had occurred to himself, but he was deterred from proposing it from the apparent reluctance of the House the day before—which he regarded with sympathy—to adopt quarters of an hour. He was willing to accept quarter-past eight, which would put things level, but he could not go further.

MR. W. REDMOND supposed that that was the best they could do, and he agreed.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Proposed Amendment amended—

"By leaving out the word 'half,' and inserting the words 'a quarter,'" instead thereof. —(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Words, as amended, inserted.

Standing Order further amended, in paragraph (b), line 1, by leaving out the words "at the evening sittings of," and inserting the word "after a quarter past eight on."

In paragraph (b), line 3, by inserting after the words "of government business," the words "and any government business then under consideration shall, without Question put, be postponed until the business having precedence of it is disposed of."

In paragraph (c), line 1, by leaving out the words "at the evening sittings," and inserting the words "during the whole," instead thereof.

In paragraph (d), line 2, by leaving out the words "evening sittings, and at all Friday."

In paragraph (e), line 1, by leaving out the words "At the evening sittings at which," and inserting the words "after a quarter past eight when," instead thereof.

And in paragraph (f), line 1, by leaving out the words "all afternoon sittings," and inserting the words "the sittings on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Private Business.

Standing Order No. 8 read, as followeth:—

(1.) No opposed private business shall be set down for the sittings on Friday, or for the evening sittings on Wednesday between Easter and Whitsuntide.

(2.) All private business which is set down for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, and is not disposed of by fifteen minutes after two of the clock shall, without Question put, be postponed until such time as the Chairman of Ways and Means may determine.

(3.) Provided that such private business shall always be taken at the beginning of an evening sitting after any Motion for the adjournment of the House standing over from an afternoon sitting has been disposed of, and that such postponed business shall be distributed as near as may be proportionately between the sittings on which government business has precedence and the other sittings.

(4.) At an evening sitting at which government business has not precedence, no opposed private business other than that then under consideration shall be taken after a quarter past ten of the clock.

(5.) Unopposed private business shall have precedence of opposed private business.

And amended in paragraph (1), line 2, by leaving out the words "the evening sittings," and inserting the words "a quarter past eight," instead thereof.

In paragraph (2), line 2, by leaving out the words "fifteen minutes after two," and inserting the word "three," instead thereof.

In paragraph (3), line 1, by leaving out the words "the beginning of an evening sitting after," and inserting the words "a quarter past eight on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, or as soon thereafter as," instead thereof.

In paragraph (3), line 3, by leaving out the words "from an afternoon sitting."

In paragraph (4), line 1, by leaving out the words "At an evening sitting at which government business has not precedence."

And in line 3, by leaving out the words "a quarter past ten," and inserting the words "half-past nine," instead thereof. —(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Questions.

Standing Order No. 9 read as followeth:—

(1.) Notices of Questions shall be given by Members in writing to the clerk at the Table, without reading them *viva voce* in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained.

(2.) On days when there are two sittings of the House Questions shall be taken at a quarter past two of the clock.

(3.) No Questions shall be taken after five minutes before three of the clock, except Questions which have not been answered in consequence of the absence of the Minister to whom they are addressed, and Questions which have not appeared on the Paper, but which are of an urgent character, and relate either to matters of public importance or to the arrangement of business.

(4.) Any Member who desires an oral Answer to his Question may distinguish it by an asterisk, but notice of any such

Question must appear at latest on the Notice Paper circulated on the day before that on which an Answer is desired.

(5.) If any Member does not distinguish his Question by an asterisk, or if he or any other Member deputed by him is not present to ask it, or if it is not reached by five minutes before three of the clock, the Minister to whom it is addressed shall cause an Answer to be printed and circulated with the Votes, unless the Member has signified his desire to postpone the Question.

And amended by leaving out paragraph (2), and inserting the words "Questions shall be taken on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, after private business has been disposed of, and not later than three of the clock," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Another Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In paragraph (3), line 1, to leave out the words 'five minutes before three,' and insert the words 'a quarter before four'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the words 'a quarter before four' be there inserted."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that he had put down an Amendment to make the Order read "quarter-past four." The effect of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment was to guarantee only an extension of five minutes for Questions. He submitted very respectfully to the Prime Minister that he ought to adopt the suggestion which Mr. Speaker had made in his evidence before the Committee, that the experiment of giving fifty minutes to Questions might be worth trying. In another portion of his evidence Mr. Speaker suggested that fifty minutes should be given to Questions. His own suggestion was, however, that they should have the round hour for Questions, and that they should terminate at four o'clock. He thought that that was the most reasonable suggestion, and he moved to leave out the words "a quarter before" before the words four o'clock. This proposal would make Questions terminate at four o'clock and give the House a round hour for the purpose of questioning the Ministry. He was certain that if the Prime Minister adopted his proposal he would find that no time would be lost. He was certain that Questions would be terminated long before the full hour had elapsed. He thought that the full hour should be given, and if that was not possible he thought the advice of the Speaker should be taken, and that at least fifty minutes should be devoted to this purpose. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment—

"To leave out the words 'a quarter before.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'a quarter before four' stand part of the Amendment."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the hon. Member had no mercy, and the more he received the more he appealed for. On this occasion he had made another appeal, but in his estimate of what would happen he neglected one very important item. That was that before three o'clock, the time not occupied by private business would be occupied by Questions. On many days there was no private business at all, or what there was, was shortly disposed of, and the hon. Member therefore took an extreme view when he assumed that the preliminary quarter of an hour would be fully occupied. He did not think that that was very likely to happen frequently, and when it did not happen, five or ten minutes would be thrown into the time available for Questions.

*MR. FORSTER said the rule would operate in such a way that it would be on rare occasions only that there would be Questions numerous enough to carry them over the forty minutes, and it was now proposed to give an additional twenty minutes. But it was admitted that there was every prospect as the session went on of the number of Questions diminishing, and it must be borne in mind that public business commenced immediately after Questions. As the time limit would not often be reached, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman might give way on this point, as it might remove a grievance on the part of private Members who had Questions to put.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that up to the present he had taken no part in these discussions, but he felt a great uneasiness about the whole matter. He was in favour of short hours, but he feared that when they got into Committee, the eleven o'clock rule would be frequently suspended. The great Bills of the Government would, he feared, be carried more often at four o'clock in the morning than at eleven o'clock at night. He asked the House to remember two things. After a certain period of the session, private business practically stopped. Indeed, throughout a great part of the session there was no private business. As to the Questions, he entertained the idea that the Answers to them need not be necessarily oral. He maintained that the most valuable part of the system was that under which Questions were put on the Paper not for oral Answer. He put almost all his Questions in that way because when he received the Answers he could send them to those who were interested. He noticed that the system had been in the course of the past sessions more and more used, and he doubted, therefore, the necessity for a long Question period.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that during twenty years of Parliamentary life he had asked a certain number of Questions. He would as soon call into question the Speaker's decision as he would the authority of the Crown, and they now had the individual opinion of the Speaker before them. They were not in the House of Commons primarily for the purpose of legislation but in order to control the Government, and the only opportunity of exercising that control was to be found in the power of interrogation. It was most important for both Parties that this power should remain uncurtailed. He thought it was in the public interest that certain Questions should be orally put, and he himself put down many Questions in that manner for the purpose of putting supplementary Questions which really often dealt with the gist of the matter. The right hon. Gentleman had given a certain five minutes and a possible twenty minutes. Could he not give them the clear hour? He thought the right hon. Gentleman would gain in the end. Very often legislation resulted from suggestions made by private Members at Question time, and as to questions of administration it was now their only opportunity of criticism. He said these things for the benefit of the Opposition, because his own position was one of benevolent neutrality, and as his right hand was now less cunning in regard to cross-examination than it had been, and as the power to move the adjournment had been done away with for all practical purposes, it was absolutely essential in order to maintain the rights of minorities that the power of interrogating Ministers should be maintained and even strengthened. Any hon. Gentleman who placed a Question on the Paper for oral Answer did so, he was sure, under a sense of personal responsibility, but he contended that they should not be deprived of the opportunity for cross-examination provided by oral Answers. It was curious how the opinions of right hon. Gentlemen changed when they crossed the floor of the House, and it was remarkable to remember that the Prime Minister was one of those by whose exertions, through the signing of a Round Robin, Questions were not destroyed altogether. If the right hon. Gentleman gave fifty minutes independent of what might be called the chances he did not think that would be an unfair allotment of time. As one who had always supported the Chair in season and out of season he ventured to make this appeal.

MR. DALZIEL (Kircaldy Burghs) said he had always been the champion of the rights of private Members but during the past few years he had somewhat modified his views of the importance of private Members in the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: It is much better not to be a private Member.

MR. DALZIEL said it had become more and more difficult for any private

Member to carry any legislation through without the aid of the Government. Therefore it was the Government which the House must hold responsible for the manner in which business was done. He did not understand the case put forward to mean that the House was to lose anything by the alterations proposed. They were going to gain something. At present the House met at 2.0, commenced Questions at 2.15 and finished at 2.55. Under this proposal they would begin Questions immediately after prayers. There would consequently be a gain of fifteen minutes, because the formality of calling out the names of a few private Bills took no time. Last session there was an extraordinary addition to the number of important Questions for oral Answer which there was no time to answer in the House, and that most valuable privilege of raising any Question on the Motion to adjourn the House was largely taken away. It was important in considering the whole question of private Members' opportunities to remember that under the new proposals they would have a much shorter time, if they had any time at all, to raise a Question on the Motion for adjournment. The Motion now before the House was simply whether the proposals before them should be adopted, and so far as he was concerned he should support the Government.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) hoped the House would safeguard their position with regard to Questions. That was a privilege which was not only of great importance to the hon. Members who put the Questions, but also of great advantage to the Government and to the House. There could be no doubt of the importance of this privilege, as a means of bringing to the notice of the House matters of public importance. One strong reason why the time for Questions ought to be extended rather than curtailed was the difficulty now attendant upon bringing forward Motions. And this privilege was one of increasing value because year by year greater difficulties would be experienced by hon. Members in bringing matters before the House. It was for that reason that he said this privilege should not be curtailed, but rather extended and strengthened.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 291; Noes, 147. (Division List No. 43.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont,Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Benn, JohnWilliams(Devonp'rt
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J.H.(Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Alexander Wm. (Banff)
Black,Arthur W.(Bedfordshire)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce, Rt.Hn.James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley, O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt. Hn. SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W.H(St.Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Eibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.

Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S.
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, William
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nichols, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncaster
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-und.-Lyne)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (S'thampton)
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A. (Elgin & Nairn)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Ambrose, Robert
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgman, W. Clive
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Byles, William Pollard
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clynes, J. R.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galw'y
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Field, William
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Grove, Archibald
Haddock, George R.
Halpin, J.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meagher, Michael
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Mooney, J. J.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murphy, John
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nolan, Joseph
O Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ry Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Weir, James Galloway
White, Patrick (Meath, North
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

Words inserted.

Amendment proposed—

"In paragraph (5), line 3, to leave out the words 'five minutes before three,' and insert the words 'a quarter before four.'"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

MR. LAURENCE HARDY suggested that between now and the meeting of the Committee on Procedure again, the Government should consider the desirability of the removal of a certain class of Questions from the list of those starred for oral Answer. He referred to Questions especially dealing with statistical Returns. The grouping of Questions according to the Departments to which they were addressed undoubtedly facilitated matters, but, owing to the time limit, an entire group of Questions was sometimes prevented from being put. In the case of important public Questions there was involved the consideration of whether or not the adjournment of the House should be moved. It was, therefore, desirable that all Departments should answer at least important Questions within the allotted time.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) sincerely hoped the Prime Minister would not commit himself at this stage to any such suggestion. It would be most objectionable if any authority should have the power to take a particular Question submitted by any hon. Member for oral Answer out of that category.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the hon. and learned Gentleman need not be afraid of his committing himself in the direction mentioned. The matter was not before the House at present.

Question put and negatived.

Question "That the words 'a quarter before four' be there inserted, put, and agreed to."

Words inserted.

Adjournment on Matter of Public Importance.

Standing Order No. 10 read as followeth :—

No Motion for the adjournment of the House shall be made until all the Questions asked at the commencement of business at the afternoon sitting have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the day, or notices of Motion have been entered upon, except by leave of the House, unless a Member rising in his place at an afternoon sitting shall propose to move the adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion, or unless, if fewer than forty Members and not less than ten shall thereupon rise in their places, the House shall, on a division, upon Question put forthwith, determine whether such Motion shall be made. If the Motion is so supported, or the House so determines that it shall be made, it shall stand over until the evening sitting of the same day.

And amended in line 2 by leaving out the words "at the afternoon sitting," and inserting the words "on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday," instead thereof.

In line 5 by leaving out the words "at an afternoon sitting."

And in line 13 by leaving out the words "the evening sitting of," and inserting the words "a quarter-past eight on," instead thereof. — (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Business of Supply.

Standing Order No. 15 read as followeth :

(1.) As soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the Business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the day on Thursday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown, moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without amendment or debate.

(2.) Not more than twenty days, being days before August 5th, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Account. The days allotted shall not include any day on which the Question has to be put that the Speaker do leave the chair, or any day on which the Business of Supply does not stand as first Order.

(3.) Provided that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous session or of any Vote of Credit, or of Votes for supplementary or additional Estimates presented by the Government for war expenditure, or for any new service not included in the ordinary Estimates for the year, shall not be included in the computation of the twenty days aforesaid.

(4.) Provided also that on Motion made after notice, to be decided without amendment or debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the purposes aforsaid, either before or after August 5th.

(5.) On a day so allotted, no business other than the Business of Supply shall be taken before midnight, and no business in Committee or proceedings on Report of Supply shall be taken after midnight, whether a general Order for the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule is in force or not, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown.

moved at the commencement of public business, to be decided without amendment or debate.

(6) Of the days so allotted, not more than one day in Committee shall be allotted to any Vote on Account, and not more than one sitting to the Report of that Vote. At midnight, on the close of the day on which the Committee on that Vote is taken, and at the close of the sitting on which the Report of that Vote is taken, the Chairman of Committees or the Speaker, as the case may be, shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote or the Report.

(7.) At ten of the clock on the last day but one of the days so allotted the Chairman shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Vote then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put the Question with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates that the total amount of the Votes outstanding in that class be granted for the services defined in the class, and shall in like manner put severally the Questions that the total amounts of the Votes outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, and the Revenue Departments be granted for the services defined in those Estimates.

(8) At ten of the clock on the last, not being earlier than the twentieth of the allotted days, the Speaker shall forthwith put every Question necessary to dispose of the Report of the Resolution then under consideration, and shall then forthwith put, with respect to each class of the Civil Service Estimates, the Question that the House doth agree with the Committee in all the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of that class, and shall then put a like Question with respect to all the Resolutions outstanding in the Estimates for the Navy, the Army, the Revenue Departments, and other ou - standing Resolutions severally.

(9.) On the days appointed for concluding the Business of Supply the consideration of that business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of adjournment, and no dilatory Motion shall be moved on proceedings for that business, and the business shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order.

(10.) Any additional Estimate for any new matter not included in the original Estimates for the year, shall be submitted for consideration in the Committee of Supply on some day not later than two days before the Committee is closed.

(11.) For the purposes of this Order two Fridays shall be deemed equivalent to a single day of two sittings.

And amended in paragraph (5), line 2, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

In line 3, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

In line 3 by leaving out the words "for the suspension of the twelve o'clock rule," and inserting the words "exempting business from interruption under the Standing Order (sittings of the house)."

In paragraph (6), line 3, by leaving out the word "midnight," and inserting the word "eleven," instead thereof.

And in paragraph (11), line 2, by leaving out the words "day of two sittings," and inserting the words "sitting on any other day," instead thereof:—*(Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.)*

Counting Out.

Standing Order No. 25 read as followeth:—

At an evening sitting the house shall not be counted before ten o'clock, but if on a division taken on any business, at an evening sitting before ten o'clock it appears that forty members are not present, the business shall stand over until the next sitting of the house, and the next business shall be taken.

And amended in line 1, by leaving out the words "At an evening sitting."—*(Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.)*

Amendment proposed to the Standing Order—

"In line 1, to leave out the word 'before,' and insert the words 'between half-past eight and.'"—*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'before' stand part of the Standing Order."

* MR. FORSTER said under the present rule they could not move a count between 9.0 and 10.0, but under the proposal

now under consideration a count could not be moved between 8.30 and 10.0. That to him seemed to be rather a long time, especially if there was no interest in the particular business under discussion.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY wished to know why the period was being enlarged under this rule. This provision in regard to counts was put in owing to the dinner hour adjournment. After what the Prime Minister said yesterday he should hardly have thought it was necessary to enlarge the time during which it was impossible for the House to be counted out.

Lord R. CECIL said he could not understand what the reason was for keeping this Standing Order at all now that the dinner hour had been abolished, unless, indeed, the Government wanted hon. Members to absent themselves for an hour and a half.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN thought the noble Lord was quite right in saying that the reason for this Standing Order disappeared with the abolition of the dinner hour. He would not press his Amendment.

Mr. WYNDHAM asked if the right hon. Gentleman did not propose to have any close time. If the House was going to sit continuously, in order to prevent vexatious counts it might be appropriate to have a close period from 8.0 to 9.0. That would prevent any hon. Member with a grievance from moving a count in order to bring everybody back from the dining rooms between 8.0 and 9.0.

Mr. WHITLEY said the object of this rule was firstly to prevent frivolous counts, but in the second place it was more of a private Member's question than a Government matter. On Tuesday or Wednesday when there was a question under discussion which did not excite much interest it would be a pity for the House to lose the right to count itself out. He would suggest that 9.15 should be inserted in place of 10.0 o'clock.

Mr. T. M. HEALY thought it was absurd that hon. Members when taking their dinner should be subjected to the annoyance of frivolous counts for no reason whatever. There was something to be said for having a close time during which counts could not be moved. No count could succeed on Government nights because if they did the Whips would get the sack. He thought there was a good deal in the argument which had been addressed to the Government from their own side.

Mr. Forster.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS hoped the Prime Minister would not give way on this point. There was formerly a Member of the House who made it his business operly to call for counts in order to harass the Government. Under the new rules he thought they would be compelled to dine at the House, and that being so they ought to have some close time during which they would not be liable to be called in on account of frivolous counts.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he had never found that little walks to the House in consequence of counts interfered very much with digestion. If hon. Members desired it, he should have no objection to giving an hour's close time, and he was agreeable to substitute 9.15 for 10 o'clock.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Standing Order further amended, in lines 1 and 2, by leaving out the words "before ten," and inserting the words "between a quarter-past eight and a quarter-past nine," instead thereof.

In line 2, by leaving out the words "at an evening sitting before ten," and inserting the words "between a quarter-past eight and a quarter-past nine," instead thereof. — (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*).

Ordered, That the Amendments of the Standing Orders do not take effect until after the Easter Recess.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*).

Ordered, That the Standing Orders, as amended, be printed.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill said it was a comparatively small and simple affair, but, as he understood some objection was taken, or some desire expressed for information as to what it contained, it was perhaps as well he should give a short explanation. It so happened that two and a half years ago there was a very bad harvest of potatoes in many parts of the west of Ireland, and it was thought by the Local Government Board in Ireland that it would be a good thing if in place of the bad seed of that year better seed should be got from Scotland and England and distributed. The same thing had been done before. Seed was distributed under similar circumstances in 1881, 1891, 1895 and 1898, and in all these cases the distribution of the potatoes to the cultivators was given to the boards of guardians. It was given to the boards of guardians because they were the rating authority, and it was thought convenient that they should be able to collect the cost of the potatoes in the process of levying the rate. The position had in point of fact changed. The boards of guardians used to be the rating authority; but the power of rating had now passed over to the county councils, and in the meanwhile the Department for Agriculture had been created. The proper course would have been to give the business of procuring and distributing the seed potatoes to the Board of Agriculture. That was when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover was Chief Secretary, and it would have been done had it not been for the fact that the Board of Agriculture did not possess sufficient staff for the purpose, and were not prepared to take it over. It was then felt that the simpler process was to fall back on the old process and give the work to the boards of guardians. The boards of guardians were accordingly employed by the Local Government Board to distribute the seed potatoes, which were purchased by the Local Government Board and sent to the districts which applied for them. This part of the work was done by the inspectors of the Local Government Board, some temporary men being taken on for the purpose. The inspectors made themselves, in fact, part of the machinery of the work which was being done, and throughout the whole of the proceedings it never occurred to the Local Government Board, or to the guardians, or to the occupiers who were getting the seed potatoes, or to anyone concerned, that the law had been seriously changed since the potato seed was previously distributed. In the meantime an Act had been passed disqualifying from sitting on any board of guardians any person concerned in any bargain or contract entered into with the Board, and rendering liable to a fine of £20 anyone so disqualified acting as a guardain. This enactment had been entirely forgotten by everyone concerned. The procedure followed in this case was exactly the procedure taken on the four previous occasions, and in connection with those there was no disqualification. Things went merrily, and the House might be glad to know that a very considerable quantity of work was done. The quantity of seed potatoes distributed amounted to 14,678 tons, and these were distributed among 63,000 occupiers and 6,892 cultivators. In all, the sum for which a loan was granted by the Board of Works representing the Treasury in Ireland amounted to £70,000. Great pains were taken in getting these potatoes, and they were sold not below cost price. This was, of course, a great benefit to the localities concerned. The seed was sold to the occupiers who applied for it, and it was considered that the debt they owed to the guardians as distributors was to be recovered by rates which the guardians were to levy. A Bill to legalise all this was introduced by the late Government last year; but that Bill unfortunately was withdrawn at the end of July or beginning of August. That Bill was absolutely necessary in order to legalise what had been done; but difficulties arose, as difficulties frequently would arise, in carrying through the Bill; the decks were cleared and the cargo thrown over, including this Bill.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Not the same Bill.

Mr. BRYCE: Clearly not, because the present Bill was brought in to legalise *ex post facto* all that had been done. The Bill of last year was a Bill in a different form, because it was to enable things to be done which would have been legal if the Bill had passed. In the circumstances, he was inclined to suggest to his learned friends opposite and beside him that the Poor Law guardians were not in this matter acting as Poor Law guardians at all. They were simply A, B, and C, because they had no statutory powers. The boards of guardians had no statutory powers. The right to distribute seed potatoes was not given to them. It had been intended that these powers should be conferred on them, but the Bill never passed. If that course had been taken and if the matter of disqualification had come up, it was a question in which some fine arguments might have been advanced. When the present Government came into office they found that a large number of persons had become disqualified through, he would venture to say, no fault of their own, because they knew nothing about it, and also he thought through no fault of the authorities who were acting as they had done before. A case had therefore arisen in which it was necessary not only to give indemnity and to legalise acts which had been done without due legal authority, but also to prevent people from unfairly and unjustly suffering disqualification owing to acts which they had done innocently. There was a provision in the Bill of last year in regard to the Parliamentary franchise. The present Government had thought it necessary to extend that provision and to prevent any disqualification from attaching to those persons under the Act of 1898. That, of course, was not in the previous Seed Acts, because it was not necessary there. The real point of the case on which he insisted was that all that had been done was done practically with the concurrence of the Irish Government in the course of last spring and summer. It was not then noticed that the purchase by guardians might be deemed a contract within the meaning of the Local Government Act, or else a clause would have been inserted indemnifying them, in order to carry out the promise that the conditions of former Bills would be followed. The inspectors of the Local Government Board knew perfectly well that in those poverty-stricken places such as Belmullet, Carraroe, and Clifden, the guardians took advantage of the measure, and purchased and planted the imported seed as heretofore; and it would be almost a breach of faith on the part of the Irish Government, after having offered them the seed, to disqualifiy them for seven years for accepting the offer. The right hon. Gentleman quoted a circular dated September 20th, 1904, which was issued under the terms of the Local Government Act for the purpose of showing that people acting under the advice of the Local Government Board in the public interest should not suffer from so acting. Therefore he put this to the House as being a matter which had been entered into entirely *bonâ fide*, and was not open to the objection which was very properly taken to any dealings by members of local authorities with themselves. There was no suggestion or suspicion of corruption or jobbery in this case. If it had been the Agricultural Department that had acted, this case would never have arisen; and it was only because that Department asked the boards of guardians to undertake the duty that the case had arisen. The potatoes were supplied to extremely poor people, and the area of distribution was as large as the area of application. He had not the number of unions with him.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Did the right hon. Gentleman confine the exemption to very poor people?

Mr. BRYCE said there were a few cases in which the persons were not rated at all, and in order that they should get the benefit of the supply of seed potatoes they had to get somebody to become surety for them. They went to their neighbours and asked them to become surety for them. Those who became surety did not get any seed potatoes themselves and they derived no benefit from the sureties they entered into for the benefit of their neighbours. All irregularities were regrettable. He agreed with the principle that they ought to remove all suspicion from a case of this kind, and he hoped nothing of the kind would ever be done again. If the thing was to be done again it should be through the Board of Agriculture and not through the boards of guardians, and a strong memorandum had been issued from the Irish Office to that effect. He hoped the House would see no difficulty in passing the Bill, the Second Reading of which he now moved.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir EDWARD CARSON said that he did not intend to move the rejection of the Bill, but he should probably at the Committee stage move the omission of one of the clauses. He quite agreed with the Chief Secretary that there might have been very great utility, almost an absolute necessity, although there was no Act of Parliament in existence to legalise it, in allowing among poor people the distribution of seed potatoes. But he was not at all sure that the distribution of these seed potatoes had been in conformity with the Acts of Parliament previously passed by this House for a similar purpose. If any one took the trouble to look at the Act of 1898—which curiously enough was passed in the same year as the franchise disabilities which necessitated one of the clauses of this Bill—it would be found that the Legislature had taken the greatest possible pains to see that there should be no abuse whatever in the distribution of seed potatoes. The very first section of that Act confined its operation to those occupiers of land who were unable through poverty to supply themselves with seed potatoes. There was no such limitation at all in the present Bill.

Mr. BRYCE: What use would there be in any limitation, when the whole thing is past and gone? It is all over.

Sir EDWARD CARSON said he could very easily understand that where the seed potatoes had been supplied to very poor people that should be legalised; but surely it was a very far advance in this kind of legislation if, without the authority of an Act of Parliament, they were going to allow the distribution of seed potatoes to people who could very well afford to pay for them and not make any limitation as regarded poverty. There would be a regular traffic in the distribution of these seed potatoes. This was not a trivial matter, because the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the amount expended reached £70,000. Was there to be no inquiry as to what was going to be validated by this Bill?

Mr. BRYCE said that that was provided for by the rules which the Local Government Board had laid down. The Local Government Board sent down inspectors to make full inquiry, and to see that these rules were observed. He had not thought it necessary to trouble the House with these details at the present stage.

Sir EDWARD CARSON said that he did not know what the inspectors did, but he should have thought that the proper way in passing *ex post facto* legislation of this kind to validate these acts was to say that the boards of guardians were to act as if the Act of 1898 had been in force and that, so long as they did what was allowable under that Act, the Government would bring in and pass a Bill which would be a practical renewal of the Act of 1898. His next point was that in the Act of 1898 there was a provision to limit the distribution of potatoes to cottiers whose holdings did not exceed in value £15 a year.

Mr. BRYCE: That was in the Bill of 1905.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: But there is nothing about it in this Bill.

Mr. BRYCE: It is all done and over.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: I know that the matter is all done; but when we are proceeding to validate what was done, I want to know what was done.

Mr. BRYCE: It was all done in the time of your Government.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that that was perfectly true, but it did not in the least take away from him the right to criticise the way in which the action was being validated. He had not the least objection to a distribution of seed potatoes for the benefit of the small farming class, but it ought to be done in the way in which previous Acts of Parliament would have allowed those grants to be given. He saw nothing in the present Bill to show him that the grants of seed potatoes had been limited to poor people. Again, they were told that the seed potatoes had been granted to some people who had given security for the purpose of distributing the seed to poor neighbours.

MR. BRYCE: It was not given to them.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The loan was made in their name.

MR. BRYCE: It was made on their security.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he had not the materials at present to say what was done. Probably they might have that at other stages of the Bill. But, if the Act of 1898 had been followed, the right hon. Gentleman would see that there would have been no difference because those cottiers would not have had a valuation of £15. He had not the least idea whether the distribution of the seed potatoes had gone beyond what was authorised by Parliament before; but that was a matter which, whatever Government was in power, should have been carefully attended to. Not that he had the least objection to any large distribution of seed potatoes for the benefit of any farming class in Ireland being made. But he maintained that it ought to be on the lines of what had been laid down by Parliament previously, and not by widening in any way what had been previously sanctioned. He came to Clause 3 of the Bill, which took away the disabilities. He understood that that clause was not in the Bill of 1905.

MR. BRYCE: The part relating to the Parliamentary franchise was.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he did not in the least object to that part of the Bill which prevented people being disfranchised because they received a grant of seed potatoes. What he did object to, and most strongly, was that the guardians who were administering the distribution of these seed potatoes to poor occupiers of land at and under £15 valuation, should be allowed themselves to take a considerable portion of the seed which was meant for the poor. He did not suppose that there was any public body of any kind which this House would, for one moment, permit to traffic with its own members, but that was what had been done in this case. That was the real objection to the clause. He did not believe that that was a matter of law points at all. It was a matter very seriously affecting the administration of public funds either in Ireland or elsewhere. He would like to know how many guardians or those who were entrusted with the distribution of this seed to poor tenants had taken this seed to themselves. He was told that it was a very large number.

MR. BRYCE: I do not know the number, but many of the Guardians themselves are very poor people.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that if that was to be the excuse, a worse system could not possibly prevail. For what did it mean? It meant that a man who had seed to distribute amongst the poor was poor himself, he must take some of it for himself because he was poor. Anything more ridiculous than the administration of public funds in such a way was difficult to conceive. Another question he wanted to put was whether any of the guardians took more than twelve cwts. for themselves.

MR. BRYCE: I cannot answer these Questions. It was all done in the time of the late Government, long before I came into office. But I believe the limitation of twelve cwts. was imposed on the guardians by the Local Government Board.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said the right hon. Gentleman kept reminding him of that fact, apparently thinking that it affected the merits or demerits of the question. He was making a protest against what he looked upon as little less than a scandal; and he did not think he was making an unreasonable demand when he asked how much of the £70,000 advanced was taken by the guardians themselves. Surely there were records of these transactions to which the right hon. Gentleman could refer. He was aware that some of the cases had been taken into the courts in consequence of which the penalties had been enforced. Indeed, having regard to the law, the courts had no alternative, and they made very strong observations on the action of the guardians in dealing with public funds of this kind. The Bill was necessary and must be passed, but it ought not to go through the House without a protest and without attention being drawn to what had really happened. He should not put the House to the trouble of a division on the Second Reading, but in Committee he should put down an Amendment with regard to Clause 3, because he did not think they ought to validate the action of boards of guardians by which they had secured seed potatoes for themselves.

*Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said that while he was anxious that the Bill should be passed to indemnify the small irregularities on the part of boards of guardians, he regretted that those irregularities had taken place. It would be a very great hardship if the members of boards of guardians, many of whose members were small farmers, were to be debarred by virtue of the public service they were giving from getting that relief which the Seed Supply Act was intended to give them. He hoped that the fact that the more severe terms of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, had been overlooked would not be further urged against the passage of the Bill. He did not believe that there was any seriously concerted action on the part of any of those small farmers to take an illegitimate advantage of the Act. He was satisfied that the money had been spent carefully and efficiently by the Local Government Board, and that full value had been obtained. It was satisfactory to know that the effect of the granting of the seed last year in Ireland was a very ample and bounteous potato crop, and in that way there had been no hardship or complaint of shortage in any part of Ireland. For these reasons the Bill should have the support of the House, and he hoped it would be passed without serious question.

Mr. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that in so far as the Bill validated what had been done he was heartily with it, but, in so far as it enabled rich guardians to deprive poor people of the small amount of seed potatoes allotted them—if the Bill was intended to advance the rich at the expense of the poor—then, so far as that clause was concerned, he was opposed to it. There was not the smallest doubt that all over the West of Ireland there was a great need for the Bill, and that in a great many unions in the West of Ireland the guardians were themselves amongst the poorest of the poor. He therefore thought they might overlook in the case of the few unions the very small irregularities and pass this Act of exemption. He understood that the effect of the Bill last year was and that the constant practice of Parliament had been to limit the supply of relief to tenants of under £15 per year valuation; but he did not think the line should be drawn too tightly. He should certainly offer no objection to the Second Reading of the Bill, but for his part he should endeavour to prevent the richer guardians from taking advantage of an Act which was intended solely for the benefit of poor people.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.) said that unless the measure were carried great hardship would be inflicted upon a very large number of poor people in the West of Ireland where the members of the boards of guardians were themselves very poor. As a matter of fact, the choice of the ratepayers must fall upon poor people. He did not think there was any difference between those who held his opinions and the hon. and learned Gentleman who had last spoken. Of course they were not in favour of inflicting any punishment upon the poor members of the boards of guardians who had sinned, but even as regards the richer members he might point out that the seed potatoes were supplied at a somewhat high price. Indeed a fair price was given for the seed by both rich and poor, and the fact that the seed was secured would benefit the district generally. The appeal for purity and no corruption came well from Members of the late administration, who had divided so much public spoil between them. The money sent to the West of Ireland could not be repaid without this Bill, and when it went into Committee they were prepared to support the Government against such opposition.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said he was not at all surprised to find that there was some very strong objection raised on his side of the House to this new clause of the Bill, and he also thought that in all probability there would be objection raised to the clause which removed the disability of disfranchisement. This measure was of a most exceptional character. It was introduced by the right hon. Member for Dover, and he found it in existence when he went to the Irish Office, when most of the work under it was already completed. But some work was going on, and he made it his business to inspect many of these districts where seed had been distributed, and to go very carefully into the machinery for its distribution. He put questions very carefully, and he believed the answers he received were accurate and comprehensive. He inquired whether there had been any distribution of this seed among those who might not be properly regarded as a deserving class, and he was assured on the authority of those who were responsible that the inspectors of the Local Government Board took the very greatest care, and worked with the utmost regard to the good administration of the Act. He was assured that the only cases in which seed was received by those who were tenants not under the £15 valuation were those to which the Chief Secretary had referred—not more than three or four cases of men who had become surety for other tenants—because cottier tenants did not appear on the rate books, and could not have got the seed otherwise. The money was not given to these people, but was lent to them on the security of the rates. The original intention of the Government, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, was to do this work through the Board of Agriculture. That could not be done, but he noted with satisfaction the assurance which the right hon. Gentleman had given to the House that in future, as far as he could ensure it, any repetition of this work would not be carried out through the guardians. He thought that was a very desirable reform. With regard to the disability clause, he believed in the strict administration of the poor law, but in this case in the poorer unions mentioned it would have been impossible to carry out this Act at the time unless the guardians of the districts had co-operated. He visited many of the guardians, and he could assure the House that they were certainly worthy recipients of the seed, and were men who could certainly be described as extremely poor hard working men, who had very great difficulty in making a living. It was really with a double object that this procedure was adopted. The first object was to deal with the threatened scarcity of the potato crop and the distress that would have ensued. Another equally important object was to secure by the operation of the Government Departments that there should be introduced into these districts thoroughly sound seed which would in all probability not only improve the succeeding crop, but leave a satisfactory foundation behind it so that the invasion of disease might be less likely. Therefore it was making use of a Government Department and Government machinery and poor law machinery to enable the people to purchase for themselves what they could not have got if left to their own resources. The Chief Secretary told them the difficulty arising under that section of the Act was never discovered until all the work had been done. The guardians were not only expected to do the work, but had been called on to do it. All their work had been done with the knowledge of the Local Government Board and their inspectors and of the Chief Secretary for the time being. Therefore, he thought it would be a case of grave desertion if these men were to be left now to suffer for their sins, though unwittingly committed, and but for the commission of which the Act could not possibly have been worked. He entirely agreed with those who held strong views about the strict administration of an Act of Parliament, but he earnestly hoped that they would not object to this measure. He freely admitted that had the difficulty arisen in his time he should have taken the step that the present Chief Secretary had taken and put in this clause. He could have taken no other step. It would have been impossible for him to have taken any other step, and no one in his place could have acted differently. Although it was right and proper that these criticisms should be made and these objections taken, he most earnestly hoped that this clause would be allowed to stand in the Bill and that the Bill receive the support of all sections in the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [Lords].

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields), who was imperfectly heard, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said it was of a non-Party character, and non-contentious, being a codifying Bill. There could be no doubt as to the great convenience it would be to the mercantile community to have this branch of the law put into a comprehensive and intelligible form, for, as the law now stood, a good deal of it was only to be found in cases in the law reports, to which the ordinary layman had little access, and, which when he had access to them, he did not always clearly understand. The Bill, therefore, proposed to state the whole of the existing law as far as it was necessary for the guidance of the mercantile community, so that they could understand exactly what were their liabilities. It was a Bill that every one wanted. There was not a chamber of commerce or any person interested in the commerce of this country who had not demanded it. The disputable clause in the Bill was one to exonerate insurers from paying on contracts that had been made for the insurance of ships belonging to countries with which we were at war. The opposition, so far as he knew, would be confined entirely to that clause, and the objections would be sympathetically considered in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir EDWARD CARSON said this was a Bill which it would be obviously impossible to discuss in the House. It dealt with the whole law of marine insurance, and was practically an attempt to codify the law. He quite agreed that it would be a great advantage if this measure became law, but at the same time he thought it was very necessary that it should be most carefully scrutinised, section by section, to see that it did not include something new which might be found not to work properly. He thought it ought to be sent to a Committee, and he hoped eventually it would become law.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [Lords].

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir W. ROBSON said he could hardly say that this Bill raised absolutely no contentious matter, but he did not think it was necessary that he should enter into an elaborate statement of the arguments for and against the Bill, because it had already passed its Second Reading in the House of Commons and had passed through the Grand Committee. It was a Bill which purported to deal with the dishonest giving or accepting of money or other valuable considerations to or by agents with the view of making private profit unknown to the principal, and, presumably, to the principal's detriment. The insertion of the word "corruptly" greatly qualified the operation of the Bill. The clause in question provided that if any agent corruptly accepted or obtained or agreed to accept or attempted to obtain any gift for doing any act in relation to his principal's affairs, or for showing any favour to any person in relation to his principal's affairs, he should be guilty of a misdemeanour. There was another clause which he thought might be less controversial but might possibly arise, namely, that relating to the making of false or bogus receipts; but he thought no difficulty need arise in regard to that. This Bill was first brought in by the late Lord Russell, and was criticised on the ground that it went far too much into detail. Lord Russell rather endeavoured to classify all the different acts which he wished to prevent or to punish. It undoubtedly made the Bill cumbrous. The Bill before the House, however, was much simpler. It did not by any means say that an agent might not take a gift or gifts, or that no one might give a gift to an agent unknown to his principal, even though the giving and receiving of such gift might have some unintended detrimental effect upon the principal. What the Bill said in effect was that the act must be found to be a dishonest act before it came within the scope of the law. The Bill was introduced some three or four years ago and passed the Lords and Second Reading in the Commons. It was then committed to the Standing Committee on Law, the ex-Attorney-General and the present Lord Chancellor being on the Committee at the time. There were only two points in controversy, namely, whether the word "corruptly" should be inserted, and the clause that no prosecution should be allowed for the offences mentioned in the Bill without the consent of the Attorney-General or Solicitor-General. The House would at once see the value of that provision, because if it were not for some such stipulation in the Bill it might be used as a means of threat for the extortionment of money. That evil was entirely prevented by the provision which had been inserted as a safeguard. There was yet another guarantee to the same effect, namely, the application of the Vexatious Indictments Act. Having regard to the fact that the Bill had already been considered by Parliament, he did not think he need trouble the House with any further arguments.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.) moved: "That this Bill be read a second time on this day six months." He said that his object was to call attention to the clause requiring the fiat of the Attorney-General before a prosecution could take place. That clause would place a considerable obstacle in the way of a poor person's obtaining redress, because in order to obtain the fiat of the Attorney-General it would be necessary to consult a solicitor, to have affidavits prepared, and to have the case properly presented to the Attorney-General. The expense involved would prevent a poor man from availing himself of the protection afforded by this Bill. It was urged that this clause was a protection against blackmailing, but there were hundreds of other offences of which a man could be accused by an unscrupulous person with the object of extorting money, and the Government had given no protection in any of those other cases. Moreover, this clause would give no real protection, because a blackmailer would be able to extort money by threatening to bring a charge before the Attorney-General. He failed to see that there was really any protection against blackmailing afforded by this clause. The main point was that if this clause remained in the Bill it would undoubtedly place an obstacle in the way of the poorer members of the community obtaining the full benefit of this Act. In order to obtain some assurance that the Government would not insist upon retaining this clause he begged to move the Motion of which he had given notice. This question had been referred to a Committee of this House on two separate occasions, and in each instance they recommended the rejection of this clause. Almost all lawyers were against the clause, and he believed that the present Attorney-General himself voted for its rejection when it was before the Committee in 1903.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) formally seconded the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Dickinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said he did not know how far his hon. and learned friend would be able to answer the Question which had been put to him, but he wished to know whether, if a prosecution took place having behind it the consent or fiat of the Attorney-General, the person prosecuted would thereby lose his right to bring an action for malicious prosecution. He had some doubt upon the point himself.

Lord BALCARRES contended that because a measure had passed through various stages before, that was no reason why it should be read a second time almost *sub silentio*. On the contrary that seemed to him to indicate that there was a lack of general desire for the measure [An Hon. Member: Why?] Because there was apparently not sufficient driving force behind it to carry it into effect. He noted the objection which had been taken by the hon. Member for St. Pancras as to the position occupied by the Attorney-General under this Bill, but he confessed that his fears were rather wider. Although the object of this measure was to prevent corruption, there was no definition of corruption in the Bill, and the Solicitor-General had not attempted to define it. Lord Russell tried to define corruption, and with that object in view he brought in a schedule to his Bill stating specifically what was and what was not a corrupt practice, within the meaning of the Act. That schedule was a failure. It was pointed out that everything not included in the schedule was of necessity excluded from the Bill. Such crimes or misdemeanours that might have been forgotten in the schedule which have gone unpunished by the Bill. Indeed to that extent the schedule of corrupt offences might be said to have encouraged evasion. Under this Bill the definition of corruption was to be left to be settled by the circumstances of the case. He did not think that was quite sufficient when under the Bill they were creating a new crime for which punishment with or without hard labour might be inflicted. On that account the whole scheme ought to receive most careful consideration. The first paragraph of the first clause was drafted in extraordinarily wide terms. It said:

"If any agent shows or forbears to show favour or disfavour in relation to his principal's affairs or business."

There was no definition in the Bill of what was meant by forbearing to show favour corruptly, and yet for that offence a man was liable to a penalty of £500, or two years imprisonment with hard labour. He submitted that there was great danger underlying these words. The Solicitor-General had told them that under the old Bill there was a danger that it might produce threats and intimidation. The penalties applied to the agent, but they did not apply with sufficient force to the person who was very often far more responsible for corrupt practices, namely, the principal himself. Who was an agent under the Bill?—He was: "Any person who is employed by or acting for another." There again a question of definition arose. It seemed to him that the terms of the Bill were much wider than the late Lord Russell originally intended. The Solicitor-General had stated that it was with the object of preventing cases of threatening or defamation of character that the fiat of the Attorney-General had been introduced. The Vexatious Indictments Act of 1859 was introduced as a further safeguard. The hon. Member for St. Pancras had pointed out that the introduction of the fiat of the Attorney General had been specifically condemned by Grand Committees upstairs. He did not think the fiat of the Attorney-General would be a guarantee against blackmailing. The Attorney-General had a great deal too much to do to give his personal care to the hundreds of cases that would probably arise, and the result would be that he would delegate the work to a substitute. That in itself was a rather serious blot on the proposal. He did not see why the Attorney-General should have a veto on these proceedings at all. Owing to the studiously wide terms used, he feard that perfectly innocent persons doing in good faith wholly defensible acts would be dragged before the Courts, while the Attorney-General's fiat would be no safeguard against blackmailing, threats, and defamation.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) pointed out that there might be a great many vexatious prosecutions in Scotland under this Bill, and he would like to see the people of Scotland protected by the fiat of the Lord-Advocate.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam), who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say that he was on the Standing Committee in 1903 which considered the Bill on this subject. The Bill had undergone so many transformations and successive additions that he could not remember whether on that occasion the Standing Committee refused to accept a clause giving dispensing power to the Attorney-General of the day. The Solicitor-General had pointed to certain of the evils which the dispensing power provided for in the Bill was intended to meet. Another interesting question, which was not touched upon but which was the most important raised by the Bill, was that large class of cases which showed agency. There were an extremely large number of people who acted in a sort of double capacity; that was to say, for both parties to a bargain. That class of case was not provided for by this section, and he thought that the Standing Committee might make up its mind that the word "corrupt" would be a sufficient protection to that class. Agency of that kind was so universally recognised that it was impossible to say that those agents, in acting for both sides, had done anything from corrupt motives, or with a corrupt effect. As to the necessity for the sanction of the Attorney-General being given to prosecutions, he remembered there was formerly a sharp division between high legal authorities on the subject. The Official Secrets Act provided a precedent, and there was an analogous provision in the Newspapers' Libel Act in which permission for the prosecution had to be given by a Judge in Chambers. These were all matters which no doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman would take care to bring before the Committee upstairs. He believed that the hon. and learned Gentleman had the same good object in view as the late Government; and he thought the House would be well advised to give a Second Reading to the Bill.

MR. T. DAVIES (Fulham) said he thought that the clause necessitating the sanction of the Attorney-General would deter many people from bringing cases under this Bill before the Courts. He did not see where blackmailing could come in, because the people who would bring actions against the agents would be the principals, and they were not likely to bring actions which they could not substantiate.

*MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead) thought that this was one of the most important Bills laid before the House since the session began. Those who were connected in any way with commercial matters in which delegation of authority was essential for carrying on these matters from day to day came into contact with the evil of secret commissions as an obstacle to honest trading. He hoped the House would therefore pass the Bill by a substantial majority. Any objections to particular clauses, such as that relating to the Attorney-General's authority, could be dealt with in Committee. He himself would prefer to see that clause struck out, but he would rather it should be retained than that the passage of the Bill should be endangered. He held the view strongly that the man who betrayed his employer by taking a secret commission was a criminal just as much as if he had been guilty of robbery. Personally, he had taken a great interest in this question of corrupt and secret commissions for a number of years and at last it appeared that those who had long wished for such a measure as this were going to get their desire. The practice was not peculiar to working men's organisations; in every section of industrial life they had these corrupt commissions. He would take one illustration. There was the question of doctors being offered a commission for securing the order for the coffins for their patients, which placed them in a very invidious position. Was it not a sad thing to think of the doctor waiting for the patient to die, in order to earn a commission? This betrayal of trust, by people of all sorts, including professional men, was a reason for allowing the Bill to go before a Committee with a view of its being translated into an Act of Parliament. It would be a desirable thing if they could strike terror into these people by giving six months imprisonment with hard labour occasionally to persons who were guilty of such practices. That would have such an effect upon the crew that the area of honest trade would be extended, and he appealed to the House to pass the Bill by an enormous majority. He looked upon it as the most vital measure of the session.

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) also hoped the House would pass the Second Reading of this Bill in the form in which it had come before the House. There were very many practices which the Bill would put an end to, and with regard to which the community would be the gainers. He was in favour of the retention of Clause 2. He hoped that the House would not adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for St. Pancras, for the difficulties which had been presented by the hon. Gentleman in his argument against the provision requiring the fiat of the Attorney-General were to a large extent fallacious or at any rate much less real than had been represented. There was in practice no more difficulty in preparing and presenting the documents necessary to obtain the fiat than in swearing an information before a court of summary jurisdiction to obtain the issue of process by those courts, and legal aid was in neither case a necessity, however desirable. He trusted the House would send the Bill to the Grand Committee in its present form, and would not take away the safeguard given by Clause 2 against prosecutions being initiated without due care.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) opposed the Bill on the ground that it proposed to create a new crime, and that no justification was to be found for it in the conditions under which trade was carried on at present. Under the Bill, if someone alleged that on a certain day one gave a tip of a sovereign or a shilling to a man, thereupon one became liable to a prosecution and a terrible penalty, and the only safeguard that they had was that the Attorney-General must consent. He constantly heard assertions about his fellow-countrymen, but he had been in trade for forty years and had given or been responsible for giving orders for over £1,000,000 worth of goods, and yet he had never once been approached with a dishonourable proposal of any kind at all. If, in the course of handling all this money, nobody had thought of giving him an illicit commission of any kind, it could not be said that the practice was a common or everyday one. If anyone had a dishonest servant they had their remedy and could dismiss him. A friend of his, a successful manufacturer in a very large way of business, told him that never in the course of his life had he ever offered an illicit commission to anybody. The workman who deceived his employer, and the tradesman who bribed, could be prosecuted moreover, but then the injury would have to be proved. Here, however, there was no proof necessary. A person came forward and swore that an illicit commission had been paid and a warrant was obtained, Of course the defendant could go into the witness box and deny the charge, but he, being the accused person, of what value was his oath? Those people who wanted to make life pure should not go about passing Bills like this. It was the most cruel Bill ever proposed and it would be a great dishonour to this House if it was ever allowed to pass. They had heard of a doctor taking a commission from an undertaker for a coffin. Well, if he chose to become an errand boy to an undertaker for a consideration, that was his business. At the same time he no doubt did a kindly act to the parties concerned. These commissions were perfectly harmless things to take. In the whole course of his business life, mixing as he did with business firms of every description, he had never once heard of an authenticated case amongst his acquaintance of a dishonourable commission paid or received. He had decided many years ago that if ever he had an opportunity in public life of giving his testimony on this question of commissions, he would certainly make his voice heard. The greater portion of the business of this country was honourably conducted without these commissons being received or given in any way, and to pass a Bill of this kind, which practically created a new crime, would be a most unjust thing. It was a measure that, if passed into law, might put hundreds of honest men in prison, and therefore it was a matter that required great consideration before it was passed. He did not think there was any justification for it. The capitalist was quite able to take care of himself in these matters. He warned the House that such an expedient as this would not stop crime. This Bill would on the one hand create a considerable amount of annoyance to a large number of honest people, whilst, on the other, it would not prevent the unscrupulous man taking or giving commissions. That a Bill of this sort should be introduced into this House, was to be deplored. They were told it was necessary for the purity of commercial life. [Loud and continued cries of "Divide."] It was all very well to cry "Divide," but this was not a Bill to rush through the House. The principle of the Bill was wrong. It created a new crime and provided unjust penalties and punishments. There were plenty of crimes in this country for which people were not prosecuted, and, while he was quite in favour of punishing people who did wrong, he was not in favour of punishing people for doing something that was perfectly innocent in itself.

MR. SOLICITOR-GENERAL rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Mr. Lupton.

Question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question," put accordingly, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

EVENING SITTING.

ADDITIONAL ELECTRICAL POWER SUPPLY (LONDON) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) in moving the rejection of the Bill, said that it was an absolutely unique Bill. He had searched through it in vain for a clause as to the area of supply. The syndicate who were promoting the measure would be absolutely unlimited with regard to the area in which they might supply. It was said as a recommendation that the Bill was supported by great financial magnates. That fact, so far from reassuring him, only increased his alarm. Promoters of Bills were usually required by a Select Committee to show that they had money enough to carry out their projects, but the financial backing of this Bill, having regard to its unlimited character as to area of supply, made it all the more dangerous. It was proposed to establish a large generating station at St. Neots. As he understood, it was by no means an established fact of applied science that there was any advantage in supplying a very large area from one generating centre. As St. Neots was fifty miles from London it was obvious that there must be loss in transmission. He was informed that the energy would be transmitted along some fifteen or eighteen wires erected upon poles by the side of a railway track, and it was clear in these circumstances that there would be great danger of the whole supply being interrupted from time to time. He now came to the relation of London to this Bill. The circumstances of London were different from those of any area in relation to which bulk supply hitherto had been granted by this House. In every district of London there was either the local authority or a company already authorised to supply electrical energy. The establishment of a new bulk supply for a company in such circumstances would be therefore absolutely unprecedented. This Bill in reality proposed to give to a speculative company power to compete with existing statutory undertakings unhampered by the conditions Parliament had attached to those undertakings. For instance, the company was to be subject to no purchase clause. Other companies were prohibited from associating their undertakings, but there was a clause in this Bill authorising the linking up of the undertakings of two or more companies for the purpose of jointly using electrical energy supplied by this company. Again, this company would have the power to take the best part of the business of electrical supply—that was, the supply of electricity in large amounts to consumers whose demand was regular and constant. But unlike the existing companies, they would be under no obligation to supply any consumer however small and irregular his demand might be. The practical effect of the Bill would be to enable this large company to compete with the existing undertakings. He did not think that that was desirable in the public interest. What had happened before would be repeated. The weakest companies would be attacked in the first place, and then the larger and stronger companies, until in the end all would be brought into the hands of this company. It would be most unsatisfactory, to use no stronger term, that at the very moment when the demand for electrical energy was extending, a new private monopoly company should be brought into existence in London. He felt that he ought to refer to the instruction † that had been placed on the Paper. It had been suggested to him that a "deal" should be made, and that upon the condition that this instruction was submitted to by the promoters he should withdraw his opposition. The effect of the instruction was that the Committee should insert in the Bill a clause that except for railway and canal purposes the powers of supply within the administrative County of London should be subject to the consent of the London County Council. That did not disarm his opposition, and he did not think it ought to induce the House to read the Bill a second time. If he read the instruction which was to be given to the hybrid Committee to which the London County Council Bill was to be referred he would have done almost enough, he thought, to establish the proposition for which he was contending. That instruction was that the Committee should consider, with special reference to the proposals of the Bill, the best means of providing for the supply of electrical energy in bulk and for power and motive purposes, and to report thereon. It had been agreed in the recent discussions on the London County Council Bill that the promoters of this Bill should have a *locus standi* before the hybrid Committee; but, if in addition they had a Second Reading given to their Bill and a reference to an ordinary Committee, the promoters would have an advantage over the Council the House never intended they should have. The President of the Board of Trade, in addition to saying that priority ought to be given to the scheme of the ratepayers, had said that the whole question would be considered by the Committee to which the London County Council Bill was referred; but how could that be effectually done if this Bill passed the Second Reading to-night, even with the instruction? The provision of electrical energy for railway and canal purposes was part of the whole question which they understood was to be referred to the hybrid Committee. If so, surely the House would not prejudge the most important part of the question by sanctioning, at any rate in principle, the supply within London by this company of electrical energy for railway and canal purposes. If this company once got a footing in London for the supply of energy for railways and canals, they would inevitably go on to supply for other purposes. Therefore, even with the instruction, the case would not be helped. For these reasons he moved that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

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† MR. HOBHOUSE: After Second Reading of Additional Electrical Power Supply (London) Bill, to move, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert in the Bill a clause to provide that electrical energy shall not, except for use upon railways or canals, be supplied, under the powers sought by the Bill, in the administrative county of London without the consent of the London County Council.

*MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) said he desired to second the Amendment. The Bill was unlimited in its area, and there was nothing to prevent the promoters from supplying electrical energy from London to Scotland. To allow such a Bill to proceed would be to create one of the largest monopolies ever known in the United Kingdom. Even if London were dealt with according to the suggested compromise, the objection of the Provinces would still remain. The Bill proposed to transmit current by overhead lines at very high pressure. Such a system he considered totally insecure so far as the London district was concerned. The sum of £3,000,000 proposed to be raised by the Bill was entirely insufficient to carry out the objects of the promoters. This Bill might very well be allowed to stand on one side, and the London County Council Bill, which would carry out all that the promoters of this Bill desired to do so far as London was concerned, proceeded with. He knew that some hon. Gentlemen were always ready to urge that municipal bodies should not be given these increased powers. They were told that municipalities were piling up their responsibilities, and the gentlemen who were so desirous of relieving the ratepayers of these heavy burdens should be allowed to step in and lose their money instead of the ratepayers' money being lost. These arguments were altogether too thin. Sunderland had demonstrated that a municipality could efficiently and economically manage undertakings equally with any public company. Increased rates were said by some people to be due to the municipalities' dabbling in industrial undertakings; but could these people produce a single solid argument in support of their contention? [OPPOSITION cries of "The London County Council steamers."] He ventured to think that the London County Council would soon be able to demonstrate that they could run steamers with success from every conceivable point of view. The increased rates and rents were simply due to the addition of municipal responsibilities, where it was a question of all expenditure and no income, and undertakings of a public character should be placed wherever they could be in the hands of municipalities in order that they might get the revenue and relieve the rates. He admitted that some municipalities had possibly over-reached themselves, and that municipalisation had got to a high pitch, but he pointed to the fact that there was the credit side to be considered, and declared that if the electric lighting or tramways undertakings of Sunderland, each of which cost over £300,000, were sold to-morrow, they would fetch in the open market £500,000 each. That was a fact which should not be overlooked. He hoped this Parliament, which had been returned on a democratic ticket, would encourage and give increased facilities for municipal enterprise, and show that they were going to stand for the interest of the many as against that of the few. He hoped the Second Reading of this Bill would not be agreed to. If they sent it to a Committee it would only be wasting the money and the time of promoters and opponents alike.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said he thought that if the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had more knowledge of the working of Private Bill Committees in this House, he would not have adduced all the arguments he had just addressed to the House. He would have known, for instance, that the question of whether the sum of £3,000,000 was sufficient for the purposes of this Bill could only be settled by a Private Bill Committee and not by this House itself. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green had described the instruction standing in his name as a "deal." He repudiated the suggestion entirely. He had never approached the hon. Member in any way whatever. He had placed the Instruction on the Paper because he desired the business of the company to be limited to its more proper scope, namely, the supply of electrical energy to railway companies. He had no hostility to municipalities undertaking duties of this sort. All the proposals of the London County Council for undertaking various municipal duties and burdens had hitherto received his support. It was because he thought that this particular undertaking was beyond their power and outside their scope of action that he was supporting this Bill. What was the Bill? He confessed that there had been very little said about the Bill itself. The measure was limited by the instruction to supplying energy to railways and canals for traffic. Whilst the railway companies as a whole supported this Bill, if any single railway company brought a similar measure before this House to supply itself with electricity the chances were that every other railway company which it touched would rise in opposition to it. This Bill had the support of all the railway companies concerned for a very simple and practical reason. For many years there had been an increasing tendency in this House to press the Government, and more especially the President of the Board of Trade, to give greater facilities for locomotion and to provide and encourage quicker means of transit at lower rates. The President of the Board of Trade could not provide cheaper and quicker means of transit unless the price of the raw material went down in price. He had been told that the generation of electricity under certain conditions was cheaper than the prevailing method of steam locomotives. When the railway companies tried to meet the proper and legitimate demands of the Board of Trade by adopting a scheme which they asked this House to consider as a practical proposal it was most unfortunate that opposition should be put forward by a great municipality like London. He did not think anything should be done by this House which would hamper or prevent the consideration of this measure by a Committee upstairs. If this Bill was limited by the Instruction he had put upon the Paper this company could do nothing except supply energy to the railway companies. That was a very important proposition. He wished to ask the hon. Member for Bethnal Green if the London County Council could prevent the railway companies supplying energy themselves? They could not compel the railway companies to take their energy from the London County Council, and the result would be that unless they allowed this Bill to go upstairs they would put those railway companies outside altogether, and they would at the same time put the London County Council not in a better but in a worse position. From the point of view of the London County Council itself, this Bill ought to be sent upstairs for consideration by a Committee. It created no monopoly and did not trench upon the municipal rights and duties of the London County Council. It legalised a position which at present was very awkward, and it would enable a Committee of this House to put the right restrictions upon the operations of this company if they deemed it desirable. Personally he had often been very sore and indignant at the treatment which the London County Council received in this House during the last Parliament, and he appealed to them not to deal out unduly harsh treatment to others. There was also the larger question of the feeling that there ought to be a devolution of the business of this House. He remembered that when he first entered Parliament it was almost enough for the responsible official of the Government to say that a Bill ought to go to the Committee upstairs and it went up there almost automatically. If they were going to load the House of Commons with private business; if they were going to decide all these questions, not before an impartial Committee, but in the House itself, and thus get, not an impartial verdict and a considered judgment, but a casual decision arrived at by hon. Members hurrying up to vote who had not heard the debate, then he was afraid that they would very greatly interfere with the smooth and successful working of the private business of this House. In view of all these considerations, he asked the House to read this Bill a second time and carry the Instruction which stood in his name.

MR. BELL (Derby) said he desired to say a few words in support of the Second Reading of this Bill and in support of the Instruction which had been moved by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He had always supported the London County Council and other municipal authorities when they had sought powers for purposes of this kind, but on this occasion he found that the object of this Bill was not to interfere with any municipality but simply to supply energy to railway and canal companies. He had received from the general manager of one of these railway companies some information which had led him to take the course he was now doing in regard to this Bill. The letter he had received stated that the company which was promoting this Bill had already entered into an agreement with some of the London railway companies to supply them with power at something less than a halfpenny per Board of Trade unit. Every one knew what an advantage it would be to railway companies to be able to get power at such a low rate. It would be impossible for each individual company to provide and supply themselves with the power necessary for their business at such a low rate. It was in consequence of the large bulk which would be produced that this company would be able to supply the railways in the London district. He understood that it would not be necessary for this company to pull up the roads, because they had arranged to convey their current along the railways. He was informed that the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway had decided to electrify the section of their line between Victoria and London Bridge. The Great Northern Railway were also contemplating electrifying some of their suburban lines, and if a company like this was formed to supply electricity in bulk he was convinced that the suburban residents of London would be benefited largely if the London railway companies electrified their systems in this way. At the present time some of the railway companies were charging far more for season tickets and workmen's fares than they ought to, and if they gave those companies facilities for cheapening the cost of working their systems they would have a right to press them for better facilities and cheaper rates for the travelling public. Then there was another advantage which would accrue if this Bill were adopted. The London County Council were taking very stringent measures against railway companies and others in regard to the smoke nuisance. He did not at all complain of this action by the London County Council, but he knew the difficulties which those employed on the railway experienced in consequence of the very frequent prosecutions undertaken by the London County Council because engine-drivers happened to emit smoke. If they could get steam engines removed and electricity adopted that would be an advantage from many points of view, and not the least from the smoke point of view, and those employed on the railways would not then be subjected to so many fines. For those reasons he should not hesitate to give his support to the Second Reading of this Bill.

*MR. BERTRAM (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) said he desired to support the Second Reading of this Bill. He thought the hon. Member for Bethnal Green had given a wrong impression in regard to this Bill when he said it was promoted by financial magnates, because the only financial magnates interested in it so far as he was aware were the great railway companies of the United Kingdom, and it was because they were face to face with a difficult situation in the management of their concerns that they desired this Bill should be passed. The difficulty in which the companies stood was that by reason of the competition of municipal tramways they found it was necessary for them to electrify their own suburban lines, and it was of great importance that they should have the means of obtaining a cheap electrical supply. The hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow, speaking on the Second Reading of the County Council Bill, had said that by the year 1915 he was confident that the London County Council would be able to provide 89,000,000 units per annum. The present supply requisite for London was 140,000,000 units, but the amount required for these suburban railway lines was 1,200,000,000 units, and it seemed to him that unless the London County Council was prepared to incur an enormous financial risk it was far better that this company, which was prepared to take that risk, should be allowed to provide the railway companies with the necessary electrical supply to enable them to bring their suburban traffic into line with the competing municipal tramways. This company was prepared at the outset to provide no less than 290,000,000 units per annum, and as the hon. Member for Derby had pointed out this scheme would not involve any breaking up of the streets. He thought there was great weight in the argument of the hon. Member for East Bristol that if this Bill was refused a Second Reading, in all probability it would still be possible for this company or for the railway companies to effect the object which was aimed at by this Bill without Parliamentary assistance at all. They had just had some testimonials in regard to the efficacy of municipal enterprise from the hon. Member for Sunderland. He knew that Sunderland had done well in regard to its municipal tramway and electric lighting system, but there had been serious losses upon other enterprises in which the borough had engaged.

*Mr. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.) said the subject before the House was one in which he took a very great interest because in many large municipalities there were very considerable enterprises, and consequently any powers which might be given to a private company to enter into competition with municipalities in regard to supplying electrical power were regarded with great suspicion. It had been said with certain reservations there was no danger in allowing this Bill to receive a Second Reading, but he thought that was rather a dangerous precedent. It seemed to him that this Bill would be likely to deprive the municipalities concerned of their largest and best customers. As far as the experience of Bristol was concerned they were able to supply power to some of the largest users in the city at extremely low prices, and the only thing that the corporation of Bristol was anxious about was to get large and regular customers in order to enable them to produce electricity at a lower rate. He thought the proposals of this Bill were of a very insidious character, and he hoped the Second Reading would not be granted.

*Mr. BARNARD (Kidderminster) hoped the House would pass this Bill. Within the last fortnight they had had suggestions made to them by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and also by the Chairman of Ways and Means upon the desirability of pausing before refusing the Second Reading to any Bill of a commercial character. It appeared to him that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, in the interesting survey he had given of this question, had provided just those arguments which were necessary to show the necessity for this Bill being sent to a Committee for consideration. He understood that one of the objections to sending the Bill to a Committee was that that course would be highly detrimental to municipal trading. He was absolutely in favour of what was known as municipal trading, but we had not reached in that matter the state of things which the hon. Member for Sunderland and others might wish. Until we did reach that position it was quite reasonable to examine closely possible alternatives. He did not think this was merely a question relating to London. He happened to be vice-chairman of a county council vitally interested in these proposals. He was not antagonistic to the London County Council; he desired that in London they should be supreme. He believed also in home rule for the outside districts. The hon. Member for East Bristol who had put the instruction on the Paper had made it abundantly clear that the company would give an undertaking that they would not compete inside London without the permission of the London County Council, except in connection with the supply to railway companies and canal companies. What was the position to-night? A fortnight ago the House sent the London County Council Bill to a hybrid Committee and at the same time they killed the other Bill. If they rejected this Bill to-night they were brought face to face with the fact that the County Council Bill would be the only one which would be under consideration. He did not want to throw stones at the

London County Council Bill. The County Council ought to be the municipal authority inside their own area. There were, however, many objections which might be raised to the somewhat immature scheme which the County Council presented the other evening to Parliament. Speaking on behalf of the outside authorities, he should like the House to consider sympathetically the circumstances of the populous districts beyond the area of the London County Council. They had to do many things which were probably essential in the interest of London, but he believed these things could be done cheaper if they were not in proximity to London. The policy of the London County Council—and it was a right policy—in getting rid of slum dwellings had resulted in the people who were displaced coming to the district with which he was connected and to other outside districts. The consequence was that the outside districts got the poor from London. They travelled to and from London by workmen's trains, and the outside districts did not get the benefit of the assessments on the factories where they worked. He did not put that as a matter of complaint, but he said that when a Bill came before the House in which the outside districts were interested it was very hard that the objection should be raised to its going before a Committee simply because, apparently, it was supposed to be antagonistic to municipal trading and the wishes of the London County Council. He appreciated the work of the London County Council, and it was in no spirit of hostility to that body that he hoped this Bill would be read a second time and sent to a Committee. When the Bill came back for Third Reading the House would have an opportunity of pronouncing a final opinion on the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said that it was to be regretted that the promotors of the Bill had not taken the same course as the promotors of the other schemes that were before Parliament. The House had decided that the whole question of the supply of electricity in bulk within the London area should be considered by a hybrid Committee, and that all the competitive schemes should be given a *locus standi* before the Committee. The borough councils and two or three private companies, accepting a greater responsibility than the Additional Supply Company, had accepted the position which the House had defined ten days ago. He thought that the promotors of the Bill were ill-advised in forcing the House to consider the merits of the measure now. They said that the House was not the place to consider plans and questions of engineering relating to the merits of the scheme. He agreed with that view, and he preferred that the House should not be forced to consider them. But if the promotors had consented to the suggestion of a *locus standi* all these questions could have been considered by the hybrid Committee.

MR. HOBHOUSE asked whether he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman would send this Bill with the London County Council Bill to a hybrid Committee. Might he point out to the right hon. Gentleman that it was a very different thing for the promoters of this Bill to go before the Committee with their scheme in their hands and to have it argued *pro* and *con*, from going before the Committee holding a sort of watching brief on behalf of a scheme which was not before the Committee.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that this company would have the same position as the Administrative County, which was represented by exceedingly shrewd and capable business men. What they considered good enough was not bad for the Additional Company. If the Additional Company had been wise they would have accepted it. Instead of that the company had tried to get a year's advantage of the other schemes, and it would really be a breach of faith on the part of the Government if they refrained from opposing this Bill. The company was also trying to take the cream of the business in the supply of electricity, and this he described as a ridiculous proposition. The Administrative County promoters said, "If you give us powers we will accept the responsibility of supplying everybody, great and small. The smallest trader can compel us to supply him with power. It may be unprofitable business, but we will undertake the unprofitable business in consideration of your giving us a monopoly to supply the profitable business." The Additional Company said they did not ask for the unprofitable business. He hoped that, as the company had been so ill-advised as to press their scheme and were unwilling to take their chance with the other companies, the House would now teach them a lesson.

Question put.

House divided:—Ayes, 51; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 44.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, RtHn.SirAlex. F.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barnard, E. B.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, HnMichaelHugh Hicks-
Bertram, Julius
Bolton, T. D.(Derbyshire N.E.)
Bowles, G. Stewart
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Govan)
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hardy, Laurence(Kent, Ashford
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Helmsley, Viscount
Hunt, Rowland
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lupton, Arnold
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Nicholson, Wm. G.(Petersfield)
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Whitbread, Howard
Whitehead, Rowland
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Younger, George

Tellers for the Ayes.—Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. John Rutherford.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Baring, Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Benn, W. (T'w'rHamlets, S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, J.H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Alexander Wm. (Banff)
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A.(Inverness Burghs)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWmJ. (S.Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H. (Sussex, EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christoph
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Glover, Thomas
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael

Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster)
Law, Hugh Alexander
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps, J Wynford (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, T. E. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas (Leitrim, S.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, C H. W. (Hiull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J, H. (Middlesbrough
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S,
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Words added

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN) ESTATES COMMISSION.

*MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said he wished to call attention to the Report of the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission and to move that it was expedient on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission to facilitate the sale of their holdings to the occupying tenants. The details of the Report of that Commission were of a highly complex character, but the main facts of the problem to be solved were simple enough. The estates in question covered a total area of 200,000 acres; the net rental was £32,000; and the number of tenants who were concerned approached 9,000. The estates were situated in different parts of Ireland, the largest of them being in his own county of Kerry. It was for the latter reason that he had a special interest in bringing forward this Motion. The difficulties in the way of purchase, which he hoped might be removed, were these. The rents were almost entirely head rents; on many estates there were several middlemen, in certain cases no less than six distinct interests, each under the other on the same estate.

Many of the middlemen were very heavily encumbered; most of them had suffered from reductions of rent, and the result was that their margin of profit was so small that they could not afford to redeem the head rents and at the same time sell to their tenants without great and even ruinous loss. There was consequently a complete block in purchase. This difficulty was so far foreseen that the right hon. Member for Dover had in the Land Act of 1903 set aside £5,000 a year as an indemnity fund to Trinity College. This was not intended under any circumstances to afford an additional endowment to Trinity College, but only to make good such loss as might result from sales which were carried out with the joint consent, and to the satisfaction of immediate landlords and tenants. In carrying out that principle, a great complication of details arose. There was a perfect entanglement of legal difficulties, and the Trinity College Estates Commission was appointed to inquire into the whole problem. That Commission consisted of three gentlemen —Lord Justice FitzGibbon, the hon. and learned Member for North Louth, and Mr. George Trench — and their Report was unanimous. He thought that the House would agree with him that the fact that the hon. and learned Member for North Louth had attached his signature to that Report showed that the interests of the tenants had not been neglected. The upshot of the Report was this: the Commission found that the £5,000 a year set aside by Section 39 of the Land Act as an indemnity to Trinity College was insufficient to secure the existing net income of the college when this redemption money had been reinvested in trust funds at a not higher rate than 3½ per cent. So the Commission recommended that an additional sum of £5,000 a year, or a capital sum of £150,000, should be provided, this additional sum to be charged—and he thought quite rightly — not on the Irish Development Grant, but on the Land Purchase Aid Fund. If that recommendation were carried out it would enable Trinity College to sell at a lower figure than would otherwise be possible to the middlemen, and at the same time enable the immediate landlords to sell on terms which would be satisfactory to the occupying tenants. In that way there would be some 9,000 tenants converted into owners in fee simple who were at present entirely debarred from the privileges of the Land Act. If any hon. Members had any lingering doubt as to the wisdom of the large policy of land purchase which culminated in the Act of 1903, he would be very glad to help to allay those doubts. For more than twenty years he had, within the limits of his powers, by speech and writing supported that policy as against the blighting system of dual ownership. He would like the House to understand that he spoke as one who had watched the progress of this purchase policy through all its stages, and had followed the tentative and progressive measures which had been introduced from the year 1869 to the date of the Land Act of 1903. He had never omitted any opportunity of visiting the purchased farms and talking with the tenants, and he ventured to assert that it had been the only Irish legislation passed in our lifetime which had so far turned out to be an undisputed success. As long ago as 1866, John Bright in advocating the advance of public money to Irish tenants to buy their holdings, made the remark that it "would be the cheapest money the Imperial Parliament had ever expended." In passing let him say that Bright was the only Liberal statesman who at that time had the insight and understanding to comprehend this Irish need. Bright's prediction had since then been wonderfully verified. We had now the solid experience of thirty years to go by. At this moment there were 80,000 tenants who were paying their instalments to the State. There was no loan in the British Empire which had been paid up with greater precision and punctuality than that which came out of the pockets of these Irish tenants. A Report presented to the House in March, 1903, prepared by Mr. Bailey, now one of the Chief Commissioners, gave the results of an inquiry into the conditions of tenant purchasers under the Land Purchase Acts. It was a document in which there were touches of humanity and humour which were not often found in Parliamentary Papers. It was based upon the inspection of 15,000 holdings, large and small, all over Ireland, and also on the evidence derived from representative persons in every locality. Their testimony was as unanimous and emphatic as it was encouraging. Improvements had been carried out on the land by draining, manuring, top-dressing, reclaiming, making farm roads, re-making fences, erecting buildings; and in certain cases they were told that from 100 to 150 per cent. had been added to the carrying capacity of the holdings. The standard of living had been raised, there was better clothing, more cleanliness, greater self-respect, and less whiskey. A new spirit of contentment and hope had been engendered; political disquiet had died away; turbulent districts had become peaceable; agitators had become farmers. The political opinions of the tenants remained as before. He believed that those who formerly voted for Home Rule still voted for Home Rule; but new elements of social stability and order were added to the community. Certain failures were, no doubt, recorded in the Report, but these fell chiefly under two classes—men who were in debt at the time of purchase, and tenants of uneconomic holdings; and the record of these failures became a lesson of very grave importance to those who were called upon to administer or to enlarge the Act. They reminded us that the mere transfer of land from landlord to tenant did not solve the economic problem, and that Government should anxiously concern itself with the future welfare of these owners. Fortunately, much could be done by administrative means, even without legislation, in particular by enlarging uneconomic holdings, by teaching improved methods of agriculture and fostering subsidiary industries, and by promoting agricultural organisation and co-operative association between farmers. The spirit of knowledge, of self-help, and of co-operation must be called in to reinforce the spirit of ownership. We were entering on a period of reconstruction. The long and desolating struggle between classes was drawing to a close, and so far as the land question was concerned he hoped we might say of Ireland that "her warfare was accomplished." There were deep and silent forces at work for the amelioration of the country. It could not be expected that in ten or twenty years we could undo the errors and the waste of centuries; but we had made a beginning, and were on the right track. However great the differences of opinion might be as to governing Ireland according to Irish ideas, there was at least one Irish idea which Unionists and Home Rulers were agreed in recognising, and that was the sentiment of home and the feeling of ownership. The moment was full of hope. Men were ceasing to brood over ancient wrongs and to look back wistfully to an ideal past—a past that never was a present. They were bending their eyes to the future; already they saw the dawn of a better day, and in the prospect of ownership they discerned and welcomed the beginnings of a new hope. It was to strengthen that hope that he appealed to the Government to give effect to the Resolution standing in his name, which he now begged to move.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) said that the object of this Motion was to rivet attention on one of the obstacles to progress in the working of the Irish Land Act of 1903; and he hoped they should be able to obtain from the Government a definite assurance that they meant to grapple with the difficulty and submit to the House proposals of a kind that would enable it to be surmounted. The difficulties which stood in the way of tenants of holdings on Trinity College lands sharing in the benefits of the Land Act were to some extent recognised at the time that measure was passing through the House of Commons, and some attempt was made to remove them. A special grant of £5,000 was made to Trinity College from the Development Grant, for the purpose of indemnifying that institution against any loss of income arising from the redemption of their head rents upon such terms as would enable the grantees to sell their estates to the tenants at reasonable prices. That indemnity grant went some little way towards enabling some of the Trinity College tenants to buy their farms; but the difficulties which remained were very serious, affecting as they did several thousands of tenant farmers. It was clear from the Report of the Commission which inquired into this subject that these difficulties must in many cases prove insurmountable, unless and until the Government made further provision by grants of money and by legislation for removing them out of the way. As Member for one of the divisions of Armagh, he was directly interested in this matter; because there happened to be nearly 1,400 occupiers of lands in that county from which Trinity College drew head rents, and a considerable number of his constitutents, therefore, were closely affected by any proposals to facilitate the operation of the Land Act in regard to these lands. The Commission reported that—

> "The Armagh estates are by far the most valuable in proportion to their extent and they present fewer difficulties in the way of purchase than any others."

That, of course, was a matter upon which they had to congratulate themselves in Armagh, where he believed, speaking generally, the Land Act had made better progress than in any other Irish county. In fact, one or two of the Trinity College properties in Armagh had already been sold—or at any rate, agreements had been entered into, and only awaited the sanction of the Estates Commissioners and the advance of the necessary money to enable them to be completed. But although this measure of success had been attained, there were several instances in Armagh of sales being obstructed by difficulties which appeared to be insurmountable, and his duty to his constituents, therefore, compelled him to press this matter upon the consideration of the Chief Secretary and the Government. He had no doubt that the Chief Secretary had made himself acquainted with the report of the Commission which inquired into this matter. The first point upon which they insisted was that more money must be found for the purpose of completing the sales of estates in regard to which agreements had been entered into. At the present time he believed the purchase agreements which had been lodged with the Land Commission represented applications for advances amounting in the aggregate to nearly £40,000,000. For the purpose of meeting that demand the Land Commission had at their disposal not more than £15,000,000. As the House was aware, this serious deficiency arose from the fact that there was an understanding with the Treasury that for the first three years after the passing of the Land Act the issue of land stock should be limited to £5,000,000 a year. That arrangement was no doubt governed by the state of the money market. They were now in the third year of the operation of the Act, and it was clear that the time had come when this restriction should be removed, or else some other means should be adopted to hasten the completion of sales, otherwise they should have such a state of congestion that the progress of the Act would be completely arrested. The difficulty to which he had alluded was a general one, concerning the whole system of land purchase, but, as the report of the Commission pointed out—it specially affected the sale of Trinity College estates. The insufficiency of funds at the disposal of the Land Commission entailed delay in the payment of the purchase money to the landlords who had agreed to sell their estates. During the time of waiting they received instead of rent—3¼ or 3½ per cent. interest on the amount of the purchase money. That was, in most cases, considerably less than the rent they had been receiving. At the same time, all the outgoings of the estate—including head-rents, interest on mortgages, and other charges on the property—had to be paid in full, until they could be redeemed or paid off—which the landlord was unable to do until he obtained possession of the purchase money of his estate. This was a serious matter for all landlords whose property was heavily encumbered, and it pressed with exceptional severity upon those landlords who held under Trinity College Grants. The Commissioners in their report stated that—

> "Taking the estates of the college grantees as a class, there are no estates—not absolutely insolvent—of which the outgoings can compare in size with those of the grantees estates. In some cases in evidence before the Commission, the rents received by the grantee only just balance the outgoings, and in many other cases the margin left over after paying the head rent, is comparatively speaking, small."

> "It seems clear"—

the Commisioners said—

> "that where, as in the case of the College Estates, large superior interests must be

> redeemed, and large rents must continue to be paid until the Redemption prices have been paid, it will be impossible for the immediate landlords to sell without losing their income, and even incurring debt, during the period of delay."

It was not surprising, therefore, to find that selling landlords, under pressure of this difficulty, had declined to sell, unless the purchasing tenants agreed to pay a rate of interest, pending the completion of the sales, which would be equal to, or even in some cases exceed the amount of the present rents. The tenants, naturally, were indisposed to do that, and consequently the operation of the Land Act was effectually blocked in such cases. Upon a review of the circumstances, the Commissioners had recommended that provision should be made for the prompt payment of advances; and what they were anxious to know was what steps were the Government taking to carry out that recommendation. Various schemes for accelerating the rate at which sales were completed had been suggested; and he had no doubt that the Chief Secretary was cognisant of them all. He understood that his right hon. friend, the late Chief Secretary had made arrangements with the Treasury, before the late Government went out of office, for the issue of a larger amount of stock during the present year than was originally contemplated, with a view to overtaking to some extent the arrears of business in the Land Commission. Was it the intention of the present Government to ratify that arrangement and give effect to it; or had they any alternative proposal to submit to the House? He hoped they should have some information given to them upon that point, because the question undoubtedly was one of the greatest importance to the ultimate success of that great measure of reform. But besides the general recommendation to which he had alluded, this Report contained special recommendations which were intended to remove the difficulties which prevented occupying tenants on Trinity College lands becoming the owners of their farms. There were a number of College estates where purchase was hindered because of the restriction in the Land Act which withheld the bonus in cases of estates sold by a mortgagee in possession. On many of these estates the whole income went towards the payment of encumbrances, and the mortgagee would not sell unless the purchase money was sufficient to redeem the head rent and give him something more than the value of his present income. The Commissioners thought a mortgagee for value was as deserving of aid as an owner who had little or no margin of property above his debts or encumbrances. Give the mortgagee the bonus and he would be able to sell the property to the tenants on reasonable terms. They should like to know what the Chief Secretary had to say to this proposal to extend the bonus clause to Trinity College estates which were in the hands of mortgagees. Then there was the important question of the leaseholds. Some of the Trinity College lands were let upon lease for terms of which less than sixty years were unexpired. Under the Land Act the lessees of these lands could not sell to the occupying tenants independently of College sanction; and the College authorities would not grant to the leaseholder an extension of his term sufficient to enable him to sell under the Act unless he consented to redeem the leasehold rent at twenty-seven and a half years purchase. The leaseholder was not prepared to accept those terms, because he estimated that after he had sold his land to the tenants and redeemed the head rent he would be out of pocket on the transaction. Hence the sale of these properties was prevented; and where estates were held from Trinity College, partly in perpetuity and partly on lease, the block extended to the whole property, because the landlord was unwilling to sell part of his land and have the remainder, with all the charges upon it, left in his possession. To meet this difficulty the Commission had made this recommendation—

> "That the lessees holding under leases originally made for terms of ninety-nine years, under the Trinity College, Dublin, Leasing and Perpetuity Act, 1851, be empowered to sell as 'Immediate Landlords' under the Land Purchase Acts, in the same manner as if not less than sixty years of the said terms were unexpired; regard being had, in fixing the redemption price of the superior interest of the College, to the value of the reversion at the time of the sale."

He would ask the special attention of the Chief Secretary to that proposal, because it related to a very pressing difficulty. It could not be denied that the problem of facilitating purchase on on the Trinity College lands was an exceedingly complicated one; and this was particularly evident when they came to consider the difficulties created by the sub-letting and sub-division of estates. He should not attempt to explain the nature of these difficulties to the House. They were dealt with very fully in the Report, and the Commissioners had arrived at the conclusion that the only way to deal with them effectually was by introducing an element of compulsion —so as to enable the interests of the middlemen to be bought out. Some additional financial aid would be required to enable that to be done on equitable terms; and the Commissioners estimated that a capital sum of £150,000 would be sufficient for the purpose. That was not a very large amount and could easily be provided out of the Land Purchase Aid Fund. The solution of this problem was so important to a large number of tenant farmers that he ventured to appeal to the Chief Secretary and the Government to use their best endeavours to provide a remedy, so that the occupiers of Trinity College lands might share in the advantages which the Land Act of 1903 conferred upon Ireland. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient, on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission, to facilitate the sale of their holdings to the occupying tenants."—(*Mr. Butcher.*)

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) moved as an Amendment to omit the words "on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission." He should like to say that, while they differed from the hon. Member who had moved the Resolution they had listened to him with extreme pleasure, because he had brought to the Irish Unionist Benches a new spirit. In moving this Amendment he was not animated by any general hostility to the general tone and object of the Motion. On the contrary, he thought it was the general opinion that it was necessary as far as possible to enable these tenants, who held directly or indirectly from Trinity College, to share the benefits of land purchase. He also agreed that the Commissioners did work very hard, and he had no doubt that their recommendations were most satisfactory. He did not see, however, what special circumstances there were entitling Trinity College to be placed in a wholly exceptional position and an altogether better position than others. What they really took exception to was that the Commission was precluded from making any recommendation which should diminish ever so little the average net rental received by Trinity College as the head landlord. In the course of the inquiry, while the Commissioners were considering the case of the Madden estate in county Fermanagh, a question was asked as to whether Trinity College had ever contributed a farthing to building schools or to promoting education in this district. That was a fair and pertinent question, but Lord Justice Fitzgibbon said that they had nothing to do with that as they were tied down by the condition that they must present some solution which would leave the net income of Trinity College unreduced. The inquiry and findings of the Commission were conditional upon that restriction. What was the mystery for this proposal for special treatment of Trinity College? It would be remembered that when the measure of 1903 was passing through the House there was a proposal made to benefit Trinity College out of the Irish Development Grant to the extent of £5,000 a year. They never knew what the origin of that proposal was. It was said to be due to the pacific persuasion of the Solicitor-General. They resisted it and felt so strongly about it that they went to a division, but it was carried. No case was shown, however, for taking that money. Now they were confronted with a fresh proposal that a further sum of money should be given to Trinity College in order to recoup it for some contingent expenses. Why should Trinity College have this consideration? It was not shown to any other landlord or corporation. It might perhaps be supposed that Trinity College like other institutions had suffered in consequence of agricultural depression during the last twenty years, but there was the extraordinary fact that, according to the Reports, the income of Trinity College was a great deal higher now than it was about the time of the Irish famine in 1851. During all these years during which other people had suffered Trinity College had been coining money. In 1851 its income was £26,000; in 1861 it was £30,000; in 1881 it was £35,453; while in the year in which the Report was issued it was £40,800. In regard to the estates on which the tenants held directly from the College the income had jumped up from £3,500 in 1851 to £7,500. What a curious contrast Trinity College afforded in this respect to Oxford and Cambridge. These Universities had suffered enormously from agricultural depression and were saved from ruin only by their urban investments. Yet nobody proposed to come to their rescue. There was only one justification for the Motion before the House, and that was that Trinity College was a great national educational institution and that it would be criminal in any way to hamper or affect its work. But as a landlord and as a great educational body they should have expected it to be very active in the promotion of education, more especially upon their own estates; but in Donegal, where it owned a tract of country which ran fourteen miles in one direction and twelve in another, there were but few schools and education was backward. He should be surprised to find that Trinity College had spent a single sixpence upon building or maintaining schools on that estate. They would expect that she would have busied herself and devoted part of her revenues like Oxford and Cambridge to University extension, but there again Trinity College had done nothing. She had also equally failed to supply the want of a national University in Ireland. Trinity College had unhappily shown herself unable to forget that she was established as the citadel of the English garrison, and although the Irish people were not vindictive, they had long memories, and they had not forgotten that the origin of the estates was to be found in confiscation and spoliation, and some thought sacrilege. Trinity College would do well to remember the tainted origin from which she drew her revenues. It was not yet too late. There was a better spirit stirring, and he would ask whether in this comparatively small matter Trinity College would not make some sacrifice. In order to obtain some great national settlement of the land, everybody, all sections of the community, all classes, landlords, tenants and middle men, had made some sacrifice. Why should Trinity College alone insist upon retaining the privileged position which she possessed and refuse to make any sacrifice for the public good?

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) said in seconding the Amendment of his hon. and learned friend that he desired to associate himself also with what had been said about the hon. and distinguished Gentleman who moved the original Motion. It was quite true that there were 9,000 or more occupying tenants affected by this Motion and that they were debarred from all redress because Trinity College stopped the way.

MR. BUTCHER: No.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: The hon. Gentleman said "no," but Trinity College demanded, and the Report of the Commission demanded on behalf of Trinity College, a sum of money which stood between these people and redress. The House would hardly believe, perhaps, that that sum was the insignificant sum of £200 a year, in order to provide which these 9,000 tenants were debarred from all redress. It was not fair for the people of Ireland to make all these sacrifices, and for Trinity College to make no effort whatever to facilitate the operation of the Act. Whether hon. Members were in favour of the original Resolution or not they were certainly indebted to the hon. Member for Cambridge University who had brought forward this question and so given an opportunity of ventilating the grievances of these 9,000 tenants. Was there any remedy for this state of things? He submitted that there was. It was a remedy recommended by the Commission itself; a remedy they had heard a great deal about, a remedy that was proposed for the settlement of the whole of the land question, or at all events for that part of it that remained unsettled. It was compulsory purchase, and if that was not a remedy he did not know what was. He thought the Government would be well-advised when they considered the Report of this Commission if they considered also not only the Motion of his hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University, but the Amendment suggested and proposed by his hon. and learned friend the Member for West Donegal, which he himself had the honour to second. The Government need not bind themselves to the very definite recommendations of the Report They had precedents to go by and suggestions made to them in the Report itself, so that if they were really determined to bring these 9,000 unfortunate tenants within the scope of a measure which was now the law of the land they could easily find means of doing so. There were many hon. Members on the Nationalist Benches who represented parts of Ireland where these estates of Trinity College were situated, and there was hardly a post that came in which did not bring bitter complaints of the tenants being debarred from the operations of the Act. On behalf of those tenants he thanked the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University for bringing the Motion forward and his hon. and learned friend for having moved the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 1, to leave out the words 'on the lines recommended by the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commission.'"—(*Mr Law.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir EDWARD CARSON said he would not stand between the House and the Attorney-General for Ireland, whom he understood was going to deal with this question, for more than a few minutes, but he would first like to say one word with regard to the position of Trinity College in this matter. He thought the hon. and learned Member for North Kildare entirely misapprehended the position of Trinity College. The picture drawn by the hon. Member for West Donegal was a deplorable one if true. But was it true? The House should understand that Trinity College was not in any quibble whatsoever with the occupying tenants. There were 9,000 tenants, and the question of all importance was, how were these 9,000 tenants to become the owners of their holdings. If to-morrow Trinity College wanted to sell to these tenants it would have no power to do so under the Purchase Acts. Therefore they could not do anything to facilitate the purchase. It was in consequence of that fact that the Commission was appointed by his right hon. friend the Member for Dover, and he thought they owed a deep debt of gratitude to the members of the Commission for the labour bestowed by them on the question. It was suggested that compulsion would settle the question. At the present moment Trinity College was under compulsion, and was anxious to be bought out. But the difficulty was to get rid of the interests between the college and the tenants. If the Government cared to take over the head rents at the proper terms they would be at liberty to deal with the middlemen and occupiers as they thought best. The only solution was to carry out the Report of the Commission.

*The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange) said that, as he had to state the views of the Government upon this Motion, he desired first to associate himself with what had been said as to the gratitude due to the Commission, which had dealt with the difficulties of the question in a way which must assist materially any Government that legislated on this question. But the Government saw no reason why any exceptional treatment should be given to Trinity College as a landlord, or to the intermediate holders under the college. It was true that Trinity College was a large landlord; and that it was doing a great public work. Still there was no reason why, as a landlord, special privileges should be given to it. Under the Act of 1903 the college obtained £5,000 a year as compensation for the loss involved in the sale of its estates; but, up to the present, no such loss had been suffered at all. It was unreasonable, therefore, to expect any further sum of money to be provided. As regarded the grantees who took under the college it was suggested that they should get something by way of bonus, but why should they be treated better than any other middlemen? Middlemen in Ireland had, no doubt, suffered a great deal, and in a great measure had been crowded out and been obliged to surrender their estates to the head landlord because of the reduction of rents. But the grantees under Trinity College were no worse off than any others. No doubt if the sale of an estate were prevented by the opposition of a few middlemen there would be a strong case for compulsion. But if compulsion were applied to the case of the grantee holding under Trinity College, why not to other cases? That opened up a very wide question for discussion. Many people thought that voluntary purchase would ultimately solve the problem, and he thought the House would agree with him when he said that the time had not yet arrived when the question of compulsion need be considered. Land had been agreed to be sold in Ireland to tenants to the value of £40,000,000. In order to go through the titles it would take several years, and it would be utterly impossible for sales that had been agreed upon now and arranged as to their terms to be completed within the next three or four years. It was not reasonable, therefore, to expect that the Government should put aside the owners and the occupiers who had agreed upon terms of sale in order to enable the grantees and other tenants of Trinity College to get a privilege. The hon. and gallant Member for Mid. Armagh had inquired what steps the Government were prepared to take in order facilitate land purchase. The first thing was to clear off the congestion in the Land Courts. The Government had already announced that £10,000,000 would be provided in the current year, and this sum was as much as the Land Commission could adequately deal with in the course of the year. It would be time enough four years hence to see whether or not these vast recommendations of the Commission should be carried into effect, but it was impossible for the Government to give a pledge to deal with the wide recommendations of the Commission during this session or in any other session.

*Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that in the minute that remained before midnight he would say that these 9,000 tenants were entitled to have their holdings sold to them as much as any other tenants, and it was from their point of view alone that he looked at the question. Years ago Mr, Parnell said very truly that the landlord must be bought out or fought out. He saw no way of approaching it except on the lines recommended in this Report, which embodied a principle of compulsory purchase. The Report would always reflect honour on Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, to whose zeal, impartiality, and labour it was so largely due. Still he recognised the fact that the Report was being met by a direct negative on the part of the Irish Party, and therefore it was impossible for the Government to have taken up any other attitude. So these 9,000 tenants would have to wait for another six or eight years before they could get redress. This showed the great value of Royal Commissions.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 4th April, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Carlisle Corporation Bill, as amended, considered, to be read the third time.

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords], considered; to be read the third time upon Friday.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill, reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Aberdeen; Brighouse; Crieff, and other places; Kincardinshire (two); Norwich; Southampton; Stirling; Swansea; and, Workington; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Borrowstounness; and Carriden; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Bethnal Green; Exmouth; Leicester; and, Wells; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Petition from Shoreditch, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law, from Abbas; Ainsdale (two); Albury and Chilworth; Ancoats; Askham; Askham Bryan (two); Aston; Audenshawe; Aynhoe; Balderstone; Barmston; Bethnal Green; Bilton cum Bickerton; Birch (two); Blackburn (two); Blackmoor; Boningate; Bowden; Bramshott (two); Brockmoor; Burgh Castle (two); Burnham Thorpe (two); Chapel Allerton (two); Charwelton; Cheltenham (two); Chorley (two); Cirencester (eight); Clun; Connah's Quay; Crayke; Darrington; Drewsteignton; Dumbleton; Dursley; East Worldham (two); Eaton; Edenfield; Elstead; Fawsley; Firle (two); Flempton cum Hengrave (two); Foston (two); Gainsborough; Golcar (two); Grayswood; Green's Norton; Great and Little Eversden; Great Ringstead; Great Warley (two); Gressenhall; Guildford (three); Hale (two); Hambledon; Hardwicke; Haresfield; Haughley; Hayling Island; Hedge End (two); Hentland (two); Heywood; Hilton (two); Holloway; Horwich; Huddersfield (two); Ideford (two); Ingleby Greenlaw; Ingleton (two); Islington; Itchen Stoke; Lakenham; Lapworth; Lasham; Layer Breton; Liss (two); Little Burstead; Llangunnor (two); Longham; Long Horsley; Longstone (two); Lower Lemington; Loxbeare with Calverleigh; Maldon (two); Mapperley; Markyate (two); Masham; Middlesbrough; Morley; Much Dewchurch; New Windsor; North Bovey; Northill; Norwich (two); Nottingham; Nympsfield; Oldham Road; Old Street, St. Luke's; Parham; Parkgate (two); Patrington (two); Penrieth; Petersfield; Pool; Portchester; Portsmouth; Preston (two); Pyrton; Reymerston; Rickinghall; Rochdale (four); St. Albans; St. Paul, Northampton; Salford (two); Scotforth (two); Sittingbourne; South Levenshulme; Sproughton; Staverton; Stretford (two); Tewkesbury Abbey; Thirsk; Thorp Arch (two); Thursley (two); Todmorden (two); Thorncombe; Uplowman (two); Urmston; Warminster; Wentbridge; Westmeon; Whilton; Wicken; Willingham and Crowborough (two); Winchcombe (two); Wingates; Winston; Withern; Witley (two); Wolverhampton; Wolverton St. George; Woolbeding; Wrestlington; and Yetminster with Chetnole (two); to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAYS.

Petitions for prohibition, from Birmingham (three); Broughton in Furness; Crewkerne; Great Malvern; Handsworth (three); Leicester; Middleport (two); Ramsbottom; and West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (MONMOUTHSHIRE).

Two petitions from Ramsbottom, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACT.

Petition from Derby, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HAYES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Return [presented April 3rd] to be printed. [No. 109.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1905 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. (SCHOLARSHIPS, &c.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 19th, 1905; Dr. Macnamara]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110.]

PRICES OF EXPORTED COAL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 15th; Mr. David Thomas]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.]

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities and for payments on death made, during the year 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated March 29th, 1906, declaring that Albert Brydges Tarn, assistant inspector or examiner of vaccine lymph, Privy Council Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOROUGHS (RATEABLE VALUE.)

Return ordered, "as to the boroughs of Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, and West Ham, and the metropolitan borough of Holborn, showing the following particulars:—

Name of borough. 1.	Rateable value of the whole of the rateable hereditaments in the borough. 2.	Rateable hereditaments in the borough in respect of the occupation of which no persons are entered in the lists of electors of the borough councillors because the hereditaments are occupied by corporations or joint stock or other companies.	
		Rateable value of the hereditaments. 3.	Number of corporations and companies in occupation. 4.

—*(Mr. John Tennant.)*

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Manning of the Navy.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state approximately the number of efficient Marines and the number of efficient seamen obtained from each hundred entries at ordinary enrolling age; and whether he can give any comparison of cost in respect of the two classes.

(Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.) The approximate number of efficient

marines and of efficient seamen obtained from each hundred entries is eighty-seven and eighty respectively. The approximate cost of a marine, from the date of enlistment to the date of qualifying for efficiency allowance, after eighteen months service, is :—Royal Marine Artillery, £55 10s.; Royal Marine Light Infantry, £52 10s. The cost of a bluejacket, entered as a boy, up to the date of being rated A.B. (roughly a total of about four years), is approximately £155. In both cases the figures include pay and victualling only.

Australasian Squadron.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the total number of His Majesty's ships stationed in Australasian waters, including the ships belonging to the Special Australasian Squadron; what are the names of these ships; what is their total complement of men; what is their total annual cost, including interest at 3 per cent. and depreciation at 5 per cent. on cost of construction and armament; what is their annual expenditure in Australasian harbours; and what is the total sum contributed towards their maintenance by the Australasian Colonies.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The total number of His Majesty's ships stationed in Australasian waters is nine, namely: "Powerful" (Flag), "Encounter," "Cambrian," "Challenger," "Pegasus," "Pioneer," "Prometheus," "Pyramus," and "Psyche." Their total complement is 3,424, including a certain number of men belonging to the Australian permanent force. The total annual cost, including interest at 3 per cent. and depreciation at 5 per cent. on cost of construction and armament, is approximately £670,000. It is not possible to state the expenditure in Australasian harbours. The total contribution received from the Australasian Colonies represents one-half of the total annual cost of maintenance, including 5 per cent. on the prime cost of the ships, up to a maximum contribution of £240,000 per annum.

Naval Engine-Room Artificers.

MR. NAPIER (Kent, Faversham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many engine-room artificers have been entered into the Navy; how many promoted to chief engine-room artificers, artificer engineers, and chief artificer engineers, respectively, in each year 1901–5 inclusive; and whether the entries of artificers and promotions to warrant rank are being continued on the same scale as hitherto, or have they been stopped altogether.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The numbers of engine-room artificers entered and promoted are as follows:—

Year.	Entries.	Promotions.	
		Artificer Engineers.	Chief Artificer Engineers.
1900–1 .	292	25	—
1901–2 .	235	39	—
1902–3 .	315	111	—
1903–4 .	406	105	37
1904–5 .	180	73	26

The entry of engine-room artificers has not been stopped, but all entries depend upon the requirements of the service; and their promotion to warrant rank is governed by the fleet requirements. An exceptional number of promotions to warrant rank have been made in the last few years for the purpose of building up the list, the rank being of recent institution; and, in future, advancement will be governed mainly by the necessity of filling vacancies.

Cost of Coal for the Fleet.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the cost of coal for the British Fleet during each of the last ten years, and also the cost of coal for the French and German Fleets during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The information asked for is as follows:—

Year.	Cost of Coal.		
	1. British Fleet.	2. French Fleet.	3. German Fleet.*
	£	£	£
1896–7 . .	589,022	282,024	283,426
1897–8 . .	792,477	256,292	286,883
1898–9 . .	937,955	233,904	320,110
1899–1900 . .	1,103,146	281,670	394,935
1900–1 . .	1,684,604	264,357	450,393
1901–2 . .	1,408,253	362,995	497,916
1902–3 . .	1,307,904	403,748	530,195
1903–4 . .	1,503,913	297,784	690,592
1904–5 . .	1,485,688	299,281	725,351
1905–6 (estimated) .	1,261,000	435,145	676,083

* In the case of column 3 the figures are those given in the German Naval Estimates for "driving machinery, cleaning, lighting, and various materials or stores for some."

Figures in columns 2 and 3 are estimate figures.

Fines on Dublin Postmen.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware of the practice that exists in Dublin of fining postmen for late attendance on duty; that, in addition, the time so lost has to be worked up and is recorded against them; that in the case of Sunday, in addition to being fined, payment for the time lost is stopped; and whether he will state what is the rule bearing on late attendance, and what is done with the fines so collected.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Late attendance on the part of postmen is dealt with by fine or by extra duty. The system in force at Dublin is that of fines. In the case of a late attendance on Sunday, a postman would only be paid for the time he actually worked in accordance with the general Post Office practice. It is not the case at Dublin that time lost by late attendance, whether on Sunday or on a week-day, has to be worked upon in addition to a fine. The fines collected for late attendance are devoted to institutions for the benefit of Post Office servants, or to the relief of individual cases of distress among Post Office servants or their widows and children.

Established Sub-postmaster.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will include the established sub-postmasters (head office scale) in the inquiry as to pay and promotion.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Since the formation of the class of salaried sub-postmasters there have been six appointments from that class to the class of head postmasters. Appointments to head postmasterships are filled by the selection of the most suitable candidates, and I do not think it would be expedient to reserve any proportion of such appointments for any particular section of offices.

Load Line.

Mr. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the President of the Board of Trade to what extent foreign Governments have, under Section 734 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, made request for the British load-line to be applied to foreign vessels.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No foreign Government has yet made request for the British load-line to be applied to their vessels by Order in Council under Section 734 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, but the British load-line has been voluntarily adopted in numerous individual cases, and negotiations are proceeding with Germany with a view to an arrangement being arrived at under which each country will accept load-lines assigned by the other.

Motor Traffic in the Metropolis.

Sir W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received complaints from householders in residential parts of London, as to disturbance caused by noise, vibration, and dust, owing to the rapid development of motor traffic; whether the police have power to regulate the times and amount of motor omnibus traffic; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have received several complaints, but I am advised that, as the law stands, the police have no power to control either the times or the amount of motor omnibus traffic. Some opportunity of dealing with this matter may be found in connection with future Bills relating to London traffic and to motor cars.

Regent Street Motor Car Accident.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to an accident recently caused by a motor car in Regent Street, when a horse was allowed to lie dying in torture for an hour and a half in the public roadway; and whether some arrangement can be made to prevent in future such suffering by putting wounded horses out of their agony promptly.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The accident in question occurred at 11.20 p.m. The police immediately summoned a horse slaughterer and a veterinary surgeon. Owing to the lateness of the hour there was unfortunately some delay in finding the horse slaughterer, but the veterinary surgeon came at once, and did all that he could till the slaughterer arrived. The police have the most stringent instructions to act promptly in such cases, and are in telephonic communication with the slaughterers, with whom they have standing arrangements for immediate attendance, and I believe that in this case they did everything that was possible in the circumstances.

Local Government Pensioners.

Mr. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will obtain a Return, and submit it to the House, of the number of pensioners on the funds of the local authorities throughout the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Perhaps my hon. friend will be so good as to send me the terms of a Motion showing precisely the particulars he desires. I shall be happy then to consider the question of obtaining a Return so far as England and Wales are concerned. As regards Scotland and Ireland, the matter is one for the Secretary for Scotland and the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Miniature Rifle Clubs.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the advisability of exempting miniature rifle clubs, affiliated to the Rifle Club Association, from the obligation of taking out gun licences now imposed upon them, provided the rifles are strictly confined to practice in connection with the club.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) It is already the practice to exempt all members of a rifle club (or miniature rifle club) affiliated to the National Rifle Association from gun licence duty in respect of rifles used only at the rifle ranges.

Indian Budget.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): To ask the Secretary of State for India if, in view of the military policy announced last week by the Viceroy of India in the Budget debate, a policy involving expenditure on a large scale, the Government will afford the House an early opportunity to discuss the situation in India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The usual discussion of the Indian Estimates and Accounts will be taken at as early a date as the business of the session permits; and I propose to include the subject to which the hon. Member refers in the general survey of Indian affairs which I hope to make on that occasion.

Army Officers as Candidates for Parliament.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the regulations governing the candidature for the House of Commons for officers of the British Regular Army apply equally to the Indian Army; and, if not, whether he will take steps to assimilate the two services in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) There has been, so far as I am aware, no case of the kind referred to in the Question. If such a case should occur, which, from the nature of the circumstances, hardly seems probable, it will no doubt be dealt with as nearly as may be on the lines laid down for officers of the British Army.

Army Promotion.

SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the block to promotion caused by the retention on the strength of regiments of officers of the rank of major who have foregone regimental promotion in order to retain staff appointments, he will consider the advisability of placing these officers upon the special list of officers extra-regimentally employed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Careful consideration has been given to the point raised by my hon. friend, but I am afraid that I cannot undertake to adopt his suggestion.

Irish Rating Laws.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Belturbet Urban District Council asking for an amendment of the rating laws, so as to place the responsibility for rates of houses valued at £4 and under upon the landlords of these premises; and, if so, will he introduce legislation to deal with this state of the law.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received the resolution referred to. I understand that the Local Government Act of 1898 was founded upon the principle that the occupier should be rated, and the agricultural grant was given upon this understanding. In the opinion of the Local Government Board, the fundamental change suggested in the resolution is neither practicable nor desirable. I am not prepared, having regard to the difficulties which surround the question, to undertake to introduce any legislation.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Cavan Rural District Council and Board of Guardians expressing regret at the imprisonment of their chairman, Mr. T. J. Smith, J.P., Mr. Fitzpatrick, a member of the board, and Mr. Mulligan, and asking the Government to introduce legislation with a view to affording every citizen the constitutional right to trial by jury and protection from imprisonment for contempt of Court.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer is in the affirmative. I may refer the hon. Member to the Answers which I have given to previous Questions upon this subject.†

Canadian Cattle.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Rathkenny Braid, and Cloughmills Dairy Society, Limited, condemning any attempted interference with the existing restrictions on the importation of Canadian cattle, on the grounds of the consequent reduction in prices of stock and probable introduction of diseases; and will he resist any attempt at legislation tending to relax the restrictions now in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The resolution referred to has been received. As to the latter inquiry, I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for East Donegal on March 27th.‡

Glenarm Relieving Officer.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board has made any inquiries with regard to the recent election of a relieving officer for the Glenarm division of the Larne Rural District Council, county Antrim; whether the candidate who received a majority of votes was at the time of the election disqualified; and what steps it is intended to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board are making inquiries concerning Mr. Robert M'Gowan, who was elected by the board of guardians of Larne union as relieving officer for the Glenarm district. Mr. M'Gowan's appointment will not be sanctioned until the Local Government Board have satisfied themselves that he has parted with his interest in a licensed hotel of which he was the owner.

Coloured Immigrants in New South Wales.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give particulars of a statute passed by the Legislature of the self-governing Colony of New South Wales in 1896, entitled an Act to apply and extend certain provisions of the Chinese Restriction and Regulation Act of 1888 to other coloured races; and whether this statute was reserved and vetoed by the Crown.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The New South Wales Reserved Bill (No. 41) of 1896 provided that no vessel should bring to the Colony persons "belonging to any coloured race inhabiting the Continent of Asia or the Continent of Africa, or any island adjacent thereto, or any island in the Pacific Ocean or the Indian Ocean," in a greater proportion than one such person to every 300 tons of the tonnage of such vessel. It also imposed a poll tax of £100 on every such person landing. The Bill was reserved for the signification of the Royal pleasure, and, upon the advice of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, then Colonial Secretary, it did not receive the assent of the Crown, and was superseded by subsequent legislation which substituted an educational test for all persons entering the Colony for restrictive measures directed against particular races.

Coloured Immigrants in South Australia.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give particulars of a statute passed by the Legislature of the self-governing Colony of South Australia in 1896 (No. 672), entitled an Act for the Restriction of Coloured Immigration; and whether this Act was reserved and vetoed by the Crown.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1383; cliv., 226-7; cliv., 1282-4.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1079.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The South Australian Reserved Bill (No. 1672 provided that no vessel should bring to the Colony "coloured immigrants" (which phrase included all persons of coloured race, and their descendants, inhabiting the Continent of Asia, or the Continent of Africa, or any island adjacent thereto, or any island in the Pacific Ocean or Indian Ocean) in a greater proportion than one such immigrant to every 500 tons of the tonnage of such vessel. The Bill was reserved for the signification of the Royal pleasure, and upon the advice of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, then Colonial Secretary, it did not receive the assent of the Crown. Legislation by the Commonwealth Parliament superseded the provisions of the Bill, and substituted a language test of general application for specific racial distinctions.

Coloured Immigrants in Tasmania.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give particulars of a statute passed by the Legislature of the self-governing Colony of Tasmania in 1896 (cap. 55), entitled an Act to apply and extend the provisions of The Chinese Immigration Act, 1887, to certain other coloured races; whether this statute was reserved; and whether the assent of the Crown was finally given.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Tasmanian Reserved Bill (No. 55) of 1896 provided in effect, besides certain minor restrictions, that no vessel should bring male persons belonging to any coloured race inhabiting the Continent of Asia or the Continent of Africa, or any island adjacent thereto, or any island in the Pacific Ocean or the Indian Ocean, in greater numbers than in the proportion of one such person to every hundred tons of the tonnage of the vessels bringing them. It also imposed a poll tax of £10 on every such person landing. The Bill did not apply to British subjects. It was reserved for the signification of the Queen's pleasure and upon the advice of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, then Colonial Secretary, the assent of the Crown was not finally given to it, as it was superseded by subsequent legislation, which substituted an educational test for all persons entering the Colony for restrictive measures directed against particular races.

Aliens in New Zealand.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give particulars of a statute passed by the Legislature of the self-governing Colony of New Zealand in 1896 (cap. 64), entitled an Act to prevent the influx into New Zealand of persons of alien race who are likely to be hurtful to the public welfare; whether this statute was reserved; and whether the assent of the Crown was finally given.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The New Zealand Reserved Bill (No. 64) of 1896 provided that no vessel should bring Asiatics to the Colony in a proportion greater than one for every 200 tons of the tonnage of such vessel; and it also provided for the imposition of a poll-tax on the master of the vessel of £100 for every Asiatic landing. The Bill did not apply to British Indians. It was reserved for the signification of the Royal pleasure, upon the advice of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, then Colonial Secretary. The assent of the Crown was not finally given to the Bill, as it was superseded by subsequent legislation which substituted an educational test for all persons entering the Colony for restrictive measure directed against particular races.

Port of Spain.

Mr. C. DUNCAN: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the intention of the Government as to the re-establishment of the charter of the Port of Spain Borough Council, which was abolished by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1899; and whether, seeing that the members of this council discharged their duties honorarily, whereas under the present management the taxpayers' money is used in paying assessors, and that the finances of the Colony of Trinidad show a deficiency of £33,000, he will consider the advisability of rendering the borough council totally elective.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The question of the municipal government of Port of Spain has been discussed by the Legislative Council of the Colony. The debate had not concluded at the date of the latest advices which have reached the Secretary of State, but the Council had passed a Resolution in favour of the appointment of a nominated Board. The Secretary of State will await the Governor's recommendations. As the municipal revenue and expenditure of Port of Spain is wholly distinct from the general revenue and expenditure of the Colony, the fact that the Colonial expenditure during the financial year 1905–6 was recently estimated to have exceeded the Colonial revenue for the same period by £33,000 has no bearing on the state of the municipal finances or the form of municipal Government.

Egypt.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay before Parliament any correspondence relating to the territorial limits of the Khedive's authority east of the Suex Canal which may have taken place between the Foreign Office and the British Agency at Cairo, or between the Foreign Office and the Turkish Government in 1892 or at any subsequent date.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Grey.*) It would be undesirable to publish any further Papers on the subject at the present juncture. If the hon. Baronet desires it, I will send him copies of the documents published in the year referred to.

Cattle Disease—Compulsory Slaughter.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he could state what the average cost per annum was for paying compensation for animals slaughtered when suffering from, or being in contact with animals suffering from, pleuro-pneumonia, foot-and-mouth disease, and cattle plague; and what was the total amount paid in such compensation between the years 1860 and 1900.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We are not in a position to supply the information desired by the hon. Member prior to 1890, but since that year the total compensation paid in respect of pleuro-pneumonia and foot-and-mouth disease has amounted to £387,514. No expenditure was incurred on account of cattle plague during that period. The amounts paid vary so much from year to year that it would be misleading to give an average, but I may state that the amount paid in 1891–2 was as much as £151,491, whereas during the last four years the amount has been only £8.

Prices of Stock and Meat.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he would state what has been the average price of meat and the average price of store cattle in Great Britain for each year for the last fifteen years.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board have no official records of the prices of meat or of store cattle for so long a period as fifteen years, but the following table, compiled from the best available unofficial records, and, in the case of imported meat, from the Customs Returns will, I think, afford my hon. friend the information he desires.

Index numbers of Prices of Fat and Store Stock and of Dead Meat, 1891 to 1905. (Prices for 1891—100.)

Year.	Store Cattle.	Fat Cattle at Metropolitan Market. First Quality.	Fat sheep at Metropolitan Market. First Quality.	Beef (Mean Price at London Central Market).	Mutton (Mean Price at London Central Market).	Imported Fresh Beef.	Imported Fresh Mutton.
1891	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1892	87	97	96	95	99	101	103
1893	93	97	93	97	95	101	99
1894	102	92	100	91	98	95	96
1895	107	92	101	94	101	93	89
1896	95	90	93	85	90	90	82
1897	94	92	97	96	94	91	77
1898	92	86	94	92	95	91	75
1899	93	93	97	96	99	92	80
1900	103	98	103	104	105	94	87
1901	98	93	97	97	99	94	93
1902	103	100	99	114	104	101	96
1903	103	95	100	103	116	96	99
1904	103	93	101	101	118	88	99
1905	92	93	101	97	112	84	97

I shall be glad to supply him personally with statements as to the actual course of prices during the years in question. They are somewhat too elaborate to be printed in reply to a Question. I would also refer him to the reply given to the hon. Member for Merthyr on February 27th last,† as to the prices of British cattle and sheep for 1890–2 and 1893–1905, and of beef and mutton in the period from 1872–1905.

Cattle Disease in Canada.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will state what diseases of cattle are known now to exist in Canada.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The most recently-published Report of the Veterinary Director-General for the Dominion indicates that the following diseases of cattle were known to exist in Canada during the year ending October 31st, 1904, viz.: tuberculosis, pictou cattle disease, mange, anthrax, black-quarter, actinomycosis, and actinobacillosis. Of these anthrax is the only disease which is at present included in the definition of disease for the purpose of our own Diseases of Animals Acts.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1008–10.

Parcels Postmen's Weights.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether any arrangements can be made with respect to the carrying of heavy parcel post by postmen which will prevent the postmen from being overloaded beyond a certain weight.

(*Answered by Sydney Buxton.*) Instructions have long been in force that postmen must not be overburdened with heavy parcels. If the hon. Member will be good enough to inform me of any case within his knowledge in which the men are overburdened, I shall be very pleased to have inquiry made.

Kilmarnock Post Office.

Mr. RAINY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the accommodation at the present Post Office at Kilmarnock; and whether, seeing that a new site has been acquired some two years ago, that the lease of the present buildings runs out next year, and that, unless the new buildings for which the plans and estimates are prepared are put in hand shortly, they will not be available till after the lease has run out, he will, to avoid expense that would be incurred in transferring wires to another temporary building, consider the urgency of putting the new buildings in hand without delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The need for better accommodation for the business of the Post Office at Kilmarnock has not been overlooked, and I am making arrangements which will, I hope, render it possible to begin the new building in time to ensure its completion before the lease of the present office runs out.

Dumbarton Post Office.

Mr. RAINY: To ask the Postmaster-General, whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience of the site proposed for a new Post Office at Dumbarton; whether he is aware that the burgh is spreading rapidly towards the east, and therefore in the direction remote from the proposed site; that for the western district of the burgh inconvenience is caused by the river cutting off direct access; and will he say whether, in estimating the expense involved in securing a proper site, due consideration has been given to the fact that the burgh is commercial and industrial, and is in a condition of rapid expansion.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The question of a site for a new Post Office at Dumbarton has received very careful consideration, and I am now in communication with the local authorities in the hope of securing a site which will meet with the approval of the inhabitants, and at the same time will not be unduly costly.

Civil Assistants in the Ordnance Survey.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in view of the character of the work discharged by the temporary civil assistants of the Ordnance Survey, the Treasury will agree to the proposal that any temporary civil assistant who has not less than fifteen years service in the Ordnance Survey shall, in consideration of that length of service, be placed upon the pensionable list, and become entitled, with the other permanent employees, to the rights of superannuation.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I have already stated that the position of the civil assistants in the Ordnance Survey is under consideration.

Keady and Armagh Railway.

Mr. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the first arbitration in the case of the Castleblayney, Keady, and Armagh Railway Company took place in or about May last, and the second arbitration in September last; and if he will bring pressure to bear on the railway company or the arbitrators to have the awards published, as the tenants affected are in state of suspense as to the result, and in the meantime are deprived of the use of their land.

(*Answered by McKenna.*) I have no knowledge as to the meetings referred to. Neither the arbitrator nor the promoters are under the authority of the Board of Works, but the former has stated that he is anxious to expedite matters, and it will be suggested to him that he should publish his award as regards the cases which he has decided, leaving the others to be published in a supplementary award.

Cost of Public Vaccination.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what amount was paid to public vaccinators in each of the three years 1895, 1896, and 1897, and for the last three years respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The only available information as to the amount of the fees paid to public vaccinators in England and Wales during the past ten years is that contained in the Report of the Departmental Committee on vaccination expenses, which shows the amounts paid during two periods of four years, viz :—

Period.	Primary Vaccinations.	Revaccinations.	Fees.
Four years ended Lady Day, 1899.	1,262,576	106,783	£149,338
Four years ended Lady Day, 1903.	2,016,666	1,168,058	£930,804

In addition, public vaccinators received by way of grant from councils of counties and county boroughs £52,525, and £49,123 during the two periods above-mentioned.

Girls' School Grants.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in the event of an educational authority deciding to convert a mixed pupil teachers' school under a master into a secondary school for girls, the Board of Education would continue to pay the grant if the services of the master be retained.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The practice of the Board is to require that a secondary school for girls must be under a mistress.

Certificated Elementary Teachers.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he can state the number of certificated teachers in English elementary schools, male and female respectively, distinguishing those who have been educated in board schools from those who have been educated in voluntary schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have no information on the subject.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: To ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state the number of teachers in English elementary schools, distinguishing male and female, who have been trained in denominational colleges, have been trained in other training colleges, or are untrained respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of certificated teachers in employment at the end of the statistical year 1903–4 was, trained men, 19,437 ; trained women, 21,973 ; untrained men, 7,823 ; untrained women, 25,487. The Board have no information as to what proportion of the trained teachers were trained at denominational and undenominational colleges respectively.

Hyde Park Roads.

MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) : To ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state what has been the average expenditure per mile during the last five years on the roads in Hyde Park, and the total expenditure during the same period ; and whether he will give some account of the way in which the roads in Hyde Park are repaired and of the materials used for this purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The total expenditure on the maintenance of the roads in Hyde Park during the last five years cannot be accurately dissociated from other expenditure on roads generally in the central parks, but it has been approximately £22,000, and the average expenditure per mile per annum £1,100. The roads are first scarified, then remetalled with Guernsey granite, machine-broken to a two-inch gauge, rolled with fifteen-ton rollers, and finally dressed with gravel.

New Government Buildings.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) : To ask the First Commissioner of Works if there are any Government buildings in Whitehall for which towers were originally designed but which have been abandoned by his predecessors.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) Yes, towers formed part of the design for the buildings now occupied by the Home Office and Local Government Board, but they have never been completed.

Naval Manœuvres.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS : To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the average cost of manœuvres during the last ten years ; and what is the estimated costs for this year.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is not possible to state with any degree of accuracy the average cost of manœuvres, but so far as can be ascertained, the average net annual cost during the last ten years, 1896–7 to 1905–6, would appear to be £78,000. The estimated cost for this year is £150,000.

Engine Room Artificer.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) : To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what mechanical apprenticeship an engine-room artificer is required to serve before entry into the Navy ; whether the examination on entry corresponds very closely to that of second engineer in the mercantile marine ; and whether the Admiralty have any reason to believe that the system of conceding watch-keeping duties to this class has worked unsatisfactorily, either in the Navy or in the mercantile marine, from which the Navy draws its reserve of engineer officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Regulations do not require an engine-room artificer to serve any mechanical apprenticeship before entry. The examination on entry provides for candidates possessing an adequate knowledge of certain mechanical trades, and, as far as possible, of the working of steam engines and boilers. Those who hold Board of Trade certificates as first or second engineers may, under certain conditions, be entered without any professional examination. As regards the last part of the Question, the Admiralty have no means of knowing what the experience in the mercantile marine may be, but so far as the Navy is concerned the Answer is in the negative.

Naval Stokers.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty at what age a stoker-mechanician enters the Navy as stoker; whether there is any educational test or requirement as to mechanical training on entry; and whether, in view of the duties of watchkeepers which it is proposed to transfer from the engine-room artificers to the stoker-mechanicians promoted from the continuous service stokers who are less than twenty-eight years of age, any changes are to be made in regard to examinations on entry.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The average age of entry is twenty. There is no mechanical or educational test, but the candidate must be able to read and write fairly. The answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Workmen's Compensation Act.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, under the proviso dealing with dependents in Clause 13 of the Workmen's Compensation Bill, it is intended that the mother of an illegitimate son should be entitled to sue for compensation for his death by accident.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Flogging Indian Natives.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that flogging as a punishment is inflicted by magistrates on the natives; and whether he will introduce Regulations to prevent flogging in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am aware that flogging is a punishment authorised by the Criminal Law of India in certain cases. My predecessor, rather more than a year ago, had occasion to call the attention of the Government of India to the subject, and I am now inviting their early consideration of it.

Tibet.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India the name and official designation and *status* of the Tibetan Shape who has been deputed to Calcutta to arrange for the payment of the first instalment of the Tibetan indemnity.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The official deputed to Calcutta by the Tibetan Government is the Sechung Shape, who is understood to be the senior of the four Shapes, or members of the Lhasa Executive Council. I am not aware of his name.

South African Garrisons.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for War what alterations in the permanent garrisons at South African stations have taken place since the reply, showing the permanent garrisons in full, given to an unstarred Question on the 15th April, 1904†.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Distribution of troops in South Africa—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxiii., 301–2.

	April, 1904.	January, 1906.
Transvaal :		
Pretoria - -	1 regiment Cavalry. 2 batteries R.H.A. 1 field troop R.E. 1 field company R.E. 1 telegraph section R.E. 2 battalions Infantry, Line. 1 battalion Infantry R.G.R.	1 regiment Cavalry. 2 batteries R.H.A. 1 field troop R.E. 1 field company R.E. 1 telegraph section R.E. 3 battalions Infantry.
Middelburg -	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. 1½ battalion Infantry, Line.	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. 1½ battalion Infantry.
Potchefstroom -	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R.F.A. 1 field company R.E. 1 battalion Infantry, Line.	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R.F.A. 1 field company R.E. 1 battalion Infantry.
Standerton - -	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. (and Brigade headquarters). 1 battalion Infantry R.G.R.	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. 1 battalion Infantry.
Barberton - -	½ battalion Infantry, Line	½ battalion Infantry.
Orange River Colony :		
Bloemfontein -	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R.F.A. 1 field company, R.D. 2 battalions Infantry, Line. 1 battalion Infantry, R.G.R.	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R.F.A. 1 field company R.E. 3 battalions Infantry.
Harrismith - -	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. 1 battalion Infantry.	1 regiment M.I. 1 battery R.F.A. 1 battalion Infantry.
Natal - -	—	1 battalion Infantry.†
Cape Colony :		
Middleburg -	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R.F.A. 1 field company R.E. 1 battalion Infantry, Line.	1 regiment Cavalry. 3 batteries R F.A. 1 field company R.E. 1 fortress company R.E. 1 battalion Infantry.
Naval Base -	2 companies R.G.A. 1 fortress company R.E. 2 battalions Infantry, Line.	2 companies R.G.A. 1 battalion Infantry.

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† This battalion is the last remaining battalion of the Royal Garrison Regiment, present strength about 140.

Practically the only alterations in the South African garrison since April, 1904, are: the temporary removal of one Fortress company, Royal Engineers from Cape Town to Middelburg, Cape Colony, and the removal of one infantry battalion from Cape Colony to Natal.

Gibraltar and Malta Garrisons.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the total number of troops of all descriptions, including Militia, at Gibraltar and Malta, and to what extent does this number represent an increase in the last ten years; whether Gibraltar and Malta are each provisioned for a siege of long duration; and, if so, whether the present War Office consider such preparations to be necessary, in view of the strength of the Royal Navy.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In the interests of imperial defence it is not considered expedient to give any information regarding the garrison or means of defence of fortresses. I am not therefore able to give a reply to this Question.

Militia and Volunteer Recruits.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can give any figures as to the normal occupations of the great bulk of the men belonging to the Militia and the Volunteers; or, failing that, whether he can give the information for typical regiments; and whether, in recruiting for the Militia and Volunteers, endeavours are made to avoid taking men from collieries, railways, docks, and shipbuilding establishments and industries.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are no detailed statistics available at the War Office to enable me to give the information required in regard to the Militia and Volunteers. As regards the last part of the Question, recruiting for these forces is carried on in the open market, and men can come from any trade.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Natal Crisis.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what were the irregularities upon which the Government relied in postponing the sentence under martial law inflicted upon natives convicted of murdering British officials.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The ground on which the action of the Secretary of State was based has been fully explained to Parliament and can easily be ascertained by my hon. friend upon reference to *Hansard*.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Do the Government propose to lay Papers relating to this subject on the Table, and if so, when?

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State proposes to lay on the Table Papers in regard to the whole of the recent events in Natal, but it is hoped to include a despatch, now in the course of preparation, which would fittingly terminate the correspondence on this subject. That will probably make it impossible for the Papers to be laid until the House meets after Easter.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Will the Papers include the evidence given before the court-martial?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot say at present, but inquiries are being made, and the Government have requested that the evidence shall be forwarded. If it should arrive in time I will see whether it can be included in the Papers.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): Can martial law be proclaimed in a country where there is no state of war?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of such a Question.

Uganda Railway.

*SIR C. HILL (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the working expenses of the Uganda Railway, during the financial year ended the 31st ultimo, show a profit; and, if so, to what it amounts.

MR. CHURCHILL: The actual results of the working of the Uganda Railway for the past financial year have not yet been reported, but on February 21st the manager estimated that the receipts would exceed the working expenses by £50,000.

Nigerian Expedition.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a punitive expedition despatched by the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria against the Munshis, who in January last sacked the Niger Company's station at Abinsi, was stopped by orders of the Imperial Government, and, after remaining inactive in the enemy's country for some time, was withdrawn without accomplishing its purpose; and whether, in view of the attitude of the Munshis, it will now be necessary to despatch a larger expedition to deal with them.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The expedition despatched to punish the outrage committed by certain of the Munshis at Abinsi was not stopped by orders of the Imperial Government, but carried out its instructions, and is reported by Sir F. Lugard to have returned "completely successful" after but little fighting, the tribes implicated in the attack on Abinsi having submitted. What was stopped was a more extensive expedition into the Munshi country, which had been contemplated, but does not now appear to be necessary.

Mr. BELLOC: Who paid his fare back?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. J. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) asked if it was the policy of His Majesty's Government to discourage punitive expeditions.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Most certainly; the Government wish to discourage this and all forms of military operations in West Africa, and all other parts of the British Empire under the authority of the Imperial Government.

Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.): May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether it would not be possible, seeing what the London Press is at the moment, for the Government to send out negations of the abominable lies that are published?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Could the names of Reuter's correspondents in Africa be given, could they be identified?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I think the Question is an extremely important one, and I can assure the hon. Member that the state of the information sent to Africa does receive the careful consideration of the Government. I admit it causes no little anxiety that the Press in the Colonies is largely under the influence of one particular section of opinion, and that not the predominant section of opinion in the country.

Chinese Police Methods in South African Mines.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information showing that a Chinaman, Li Kui, who was sergeant of police at the Langlaate Mine, was in the habit of torturing the Chinese coolies employed there, hanging them by their thumbs and whipping them, and also dealt largely in opium and gin; and, if so, what steps have been taken to effectually put a stop to such practices.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has no information to this effect, but is expecting a full Report by mail. The information so far received is to the effect that this person was ordered to be repatriated under Section 7 of the Ordinance No. 27 of 1905, under which the superintendent may repatriate any labourer who is a danger to the exercise of the proper control of labourers on any mine. He left the Transvaal on March 24th. Inquiry will be made into the truth of the hon. Member's statement and as to any steps which have been taken.

Mr. BELLOC: Who paid his fare back?

[No Answer was returned.]

Chinese Crime in South Africa.

Mr. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement made by Mr. Chaplin, the president of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, at the annual general meeting on

February 22nd last, that nineteen inhabitants of the Transvaal had been murdered by Chinese coolies, of whom eight were white people; and whether the Government is now able to give the promised Return of all the crimes committed since last June upon the people of the Transvaal by Chinese labourers in the mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: (1) I have seen the statement referred to. (2) The promised Return has not yet been received from Lord Selborne. A telegram has been sent to him asking when the information may be expected.

Baghdad Railway Scheme.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will make inquiries as to the progress of the Baghdad Railway scheme since the first section was completed in 1904; and whether he will communicate such information as he may obtain.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Sir EDWARD GREY): As we are not parties to the scheme, we have no means of knowing anything, except the actual progress of the railway, of which the first section has been completed, and that is all so far. When any more progress is made we shall be kept informed.

Zanzibar.

SIR C. HILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the port of Zanzibar is now free from plague; and, if so, whether the ports of German East Africa have been reopened to sailing vessels arriving from Zanzibar.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Zanzibar was declared free from plague on November 23rd. Dhow traffic between Zanzibar bar and the port of Dar-es-Salaam has been reopened, subject to certain sanitary precautions.

Mallaig Breakwater.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the North British Railway Company has not yet carried out the construction of a breakwater at Mallaig, part of the agreement with the Government; if he is aware that in consequence of the want of this breakwater the fishing fleet at Mallaig has recently, on more than one occasion, been seriously damaged; and, seeing that the owners of the fishing boats threaten to leave the district, will he call upon the railway company to complete the terms of their agreement with the least possible delay.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The Board of Trade have been informed by the railway company that there is no probability of the breakwater at Mallaig being completed before April, 1907. The Board have no power to compel the company to execute the works, which, I understand, have been delayed owing to the extra cost of the railway beyond what was estimated. My right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland will deal with the rest of the Question.

Shipping of Foreign Seamen.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the proceedings taken in the Ramsgate Borough police court, on March 28th, against two foreign seamen, members of the crew of the ship "Vivid," in the course of which the captain of the ship stated that the men were shipped at Sunderland at wages at £2 10s. and £2 respectively for the voyage, through a boarding-master, to whom the captain paid £1 for one man and £1 5s. for the other, that they did not understand their duties as seamen, that they did not understand the commands given to them, that the captain had to manage as best he could by motioning to them, and that the men had not signed on before any officer; whether it is permitted to the masters of ships to engage such men in British ports without taking them before a superintendent; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: My attention has been called to the case to which the hon. Member refers. The vessel in question is employed in the home trade and is therefore not required to engage her crew before a superintendent or other Board of Trade officer. The master states that the sums of £1 and £1 5s. were merely given as advances to enable the men to settle their accounts for board and lodging. As I have said, there is nothing in the law to require such men to be taken before a superintendent when engaged.

District Railway Delays.

Mr. T. DAVIES (Fulham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the number of accidents caused by the breaking of axles on the District Railway; whether he has inquired as to the cause of those breakages, and what steps has he taken to obviate such accidents in the future; whether he can give any information as to the makers of the faulty axles; and whether any other electric railway has had similar experience with regard to their axles.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: My attention has been called to the matter, and I have appointed an Inspecting Officer of Railways to inquire into the causes of two of the breakages. I have also pointed out to the Metropolitan District Railway Company the urgent necessity for taking measures to prevent such accidents in future. I understand that the axles broken have been those of the trailing bogies of the motor vehicles, and that no time is being lost by the company in replacing all such axles with others of a stronger type. More than a third have been replaced already, and the whole of the work should be accomplished in less than six weeks. The axles were made by Krupp at Essen. The number of broken axles reported to the Board since the beginning of 1904 on all electrically worked lines, other than the District Railway, has been seven.

Mail Cart Contracts.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when the tenders for supply of horses and men for mail and parcel post work will be invited; and whether, before inviting such tenders, or agreeing upon any tenders, he will receive a memorial or a deputation from the London Carmen's Trade Union, representing the workmen concerned, on the working conditions, rates of wages, and hours of labour of such carmen, and others, working for the said contractors.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) It is not at present necessary to call for tenders for mail cart services in London, but I shall be glad to receive and to consider at any time any memorial or information which the London Carmen's Trade Union may send me in the interest of the carmen employed by the contractors on mail services.

London West Central District Office—Sorters' Appeal.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if an appeal from Mr. P. J. Walsh, sorter, London West Central District Office, has been received, and on what grounds and on what report his probationary period and increment had been extended for three months; and whether he is making inquiries in accordance with Mr. Walsh's appeal.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: An appeal from Mr. Walsh has been received. I have already made full inquiry into the matter; and I am satisfied that his complaints are unfounded. His probationary period had been extended, and his increment deferred on reports that he had shown lack of energy and of interest in his work.

West Central District Office—Inspector's Attitude to Irishmen.

Mr. SHEEHY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the attitude of the senior inspector, sorting office, West Central District Office, London, towards the Irishmen engaged at that office; and what steps he intends taking to terminate such a state of things.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am assured that no complaint has been received from any class of officers at the West Central District Office, concerning the Inspector in question; and I am satisfied that there are no grounds for such complaint against him.

Newcastle-on-Tyne Post Office—Scales of Pay.

Mr. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General upon what grounds are the scales of pay of the Newcastle-on-Tyne postal and telegraph staff officials less than those obtaining at Leeds and Bristol.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The scale of the sorting clerks and telegraphists is the same at the three offices named. The pay of superintending officers varies in accordance with the total amount of work performed at each office. At Newcastle-on-Tyne the amount of work is considerably less than at either Leeds or Bristol.

Telegraphic Arrangements at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

MR. CAIRNS: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that inconvenience is suffered in the extensive and populous eastern district of Newcastle-on-Tyne for lack of adequate postal and telegraphic facilities; that many business people and seafaring families reside there, and cannot get stamps or send off telegrams after 8 p.m. without going a distance of two to three miles; and will he arrange for the telegraph office to be open all day and night, and the postal facilities to be in keeping with the needs of the district.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I will have inquiry made in regard to the hon. Member's suggestion that additional post and telegraph facilities at night are required in the eastern district of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Criminal Procedure in Ireland.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that counsel representing the Law Officers of the Crown in Criminal trials in Ireland, even when the prisoner has not called witnesses or put in evidence, exercise a general right of reply; and whether, seeing that in the English criminal courts the exercise in such cases of a general right of reply is restricted to the Attorney-General or Solicitor-General alone in criminal cases conducted by them in person, and is rarely used, and has frequently been exercised by gentlemen holding the positions of Law Officers of the Crown as an invidious personal privilege, he will, with a view to assimilate the practice in England and Ireland, give directions to counsel representing him in criminal cases not to have recourse to an exceptional procedure permitted to the Law Officers of the Crown in England to the exclusion of all other counsel by a resolution of the English judiciary in December, 1884.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): It is, no doubt, as a general rule, desirable that the practice in criminal trials in Ireland should be similar to that in England, but it is not within the province of the Attorney-General to regulate the procedure in such cases. Should the attention of the Irish Judges be drawn to the Resolution of the English judiciary referred to by the hon. Member, I have no doubt that they would give to it all the consideration due to the expression of the opinion of so eminent a body.

"Showing Cause."

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in view of the fact that in Ireland a man summoned by the Crown to show cause why he should not be bound over to keep the peace and be of good behaviour, is not allowed to give evidence to show such cause, and may be imprisoned, he will have such law amended so as to enable a man, under such circumstances, to give evidence to show cause, as is allowed in Great Britain.

MR. CHERRY: The difference between the practice of the English and Irish Courts referred to in the Question, so far as it exists, arises from the fact that the Criminal Evidence Act of 1898, which makes persons charged with offences competent witnesses on their own behalf, does not apply to Ireland. The Government cannot undertake to bring in any Bill this session to extend the Act to Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Seeing that Mr. Justice Gibson has recommended a change, will the right hon. Gentleman promise a Bill for next session?

MR. CHERRY: Any recommendation by Mr. Justice Gibson will, of course, receive sympathetic consideration.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Any proposal to give Crown Prosecution power to cross-examine prisoners will be opposed by me.

Labourers (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, with a view to the liberal provisions of the forthcoming Workers' Bill, he will have all representation forms under the Labourers' Acts which are, or have been, disallowed on technical and other unsubstantial grounds preserved for use immediately the new Act comes into force, and provision inserted in the Bill to make these representations available without further delay, trouble, inquiry, or expense.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): It is presumed that the hon. Member refers to the forthcoming Labourers (Ireland) Bill. While desiring to save all possible expense, I am advised that not only is the suggestion made in the Question impracticable owing to changed circumstances and other causes, but that even if it were practicable its adoption would be unnecessary, for reasons which I could not now explain without stating the provisions proposed to be made in the Bill. I would ask the hon. Member to await the introduction of the Bill.

Delvin Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will request the Local Government Board to furnish the Delvin District Council with a copy of Inspector Wilson Lynch's report, a summary of the evidence, other than that given at the public inquiry, with the names of the persons who gave it, and the grounds for disallowance in each of the sixty-five cases in which the Board have rejected the cottages and plots proposed by the council, and thus rendered the expense incurred fruitless; and will the Board state specially what it proposes to do in the case of Michael Gibney, whose present habitation has been condemned by the medical officer.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are prepared to furnish a copy of their inspector's report to the rural district council if they should apply for it. No evidence was taken other than that given at the public inquiry. The Board have already informed the council of the grounds of the rejection of sixty-two of the cases included in the scheme. A Provisional Order having been issued in the case, the Board have no power to make any addition to the order or to reopen any of the cases excluded from it. The case of Michael Gibney is one of the excluded cases.

Irish Land Act Files.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will the Irish Land Commission allow an independent examination to be made of the files in their Court in cases in which they have fixed judicial rents, for the purpose of either confirming or refuting the allegation that the pink schedule is inadequate and not made up in accordance with the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, and that the tenants in those cases have not been given the credit for occupation, interest and improvements, to which they are legally and equitably entitled.

Mr. BRYCE: The answer to the Question is in the negative. The Land Commissioners inform me that it would be impossible for the Land Commission, as a Court of Record, to discuss questions which have come or may come before them for judicial decision. They regard the suggestion as unprecedented in the history of judicial tribunals.

Pedigree Stock for Ireland.

Mr. GLENDINNING (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of bulls and cows purchased by the Irish Department of Agriculture in England and Scotland during the past five years; the prices paid for same; the expenses incurred by representatives going over to purchase; if these representatives, when on the business of the Department, made private purchases for themselves; what has become of these bulls and cows so purchased; and if the projected Commission will inquire into these purchases, with a view to evidence being given that these bulls and cows could have been purchased as well in Ireland as in England or Scotland.

Mr. BRYCE: During the five years ending March 31st, 1906, 276 pedigree bulls and twenty-four pedigree cows and heifers were purchased in England and Scotland for the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction at a total cost of £14,906. The usual travelling and subsistence expenses of the Department's representatives were paid. In most cases the animals were purchased by a permanent inspector of the Department, who in no instance made private purchases for himself. On a few occasions the Department found it necessary to employ the services of a person not on their staff, and there was nothing to prevent such persons from making private purchases; but the Department have no information that he did so. The bulls were sold to applicants for county premiums, with the exception of seven which were retained by the Department for their own herds. The twenty-four cows and heifers were distributed among the Department's agricultural stations. The number of animals required has not been obtainable in Ireland, nor has the Department found it possible to procure, even in Great Britain, a sufficient number of bulls to supply the demand which exists under their live stock schemes. It will be in the discretion of the Committee whether they will inquire into this particular branch of the work of the Department.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Had the Department exhausted the supply in Ireland before application was made elsewhere?

Mr. BRYCE: I assume the Department purchased what they could in Ireland.

Adair, Mountmellick Estate.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state upon what terms the planter, who occupies the farm on the Adair, Mountmellick, estate, from which Thomas Flanagan, Clonaghadoe, was evicted in 1884, is in occupation; and whether the planter in question has been approached by the Estates Commissioners, with a view to Flanagan's reinstatement; and, if so, with what result.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have no information as to the terms upon which the farm formerly occupied by Flanagan is held by the present tenant. This tenant has not been approached by the Commissioners, who have no power to arrange for the restoration of Flanagan unless the estate concerned comes before them for sale. No proceedings for the sale of the estate have been instituted before the Commissioners.

Mr. DELANY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware the whole estate was sold under a previous Act?

Mr. BRYCE: I am not aware of that.

Mr. DELANY: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask the Estates Commissioners to intervene?

Mr. BRYCE: I understand they have no power under the circumstances that now exist.

Mr. Croker and his Croom Tenants.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say how negotiations for sale and purchase on the lands of Ballygrennan, Croom, county Limerick, as between Mr. Edward Croker and his tenants stand at present; is he aware that as far back as November last arrangements were made on the understanding that the tenants should pay directly a gale of rent, then barely due; that on the payment of the rent by three of the tenants out of four the agent alleged that the title deeds to the estate could not be found so as to break up the sale; and that the fourth tenant, Michael Cussen, has been processed for £7 17s., amount of dead gale; and does he propose to take any, and, if any, what action in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no proceedings for the sale of this estate are pending before them, and they have no information as to the matters of fact alleged in the Question.

Registration of Land Title in Ireland.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that there are at present no fewer than 90,000 holdings on the register, which are at present increasing at the rate of 14,000 a year, it is the intention of the Government to introduce during the present session a Bill for the perfecting of the system of local registration of title in Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that the figures quoted in the Question are substantially correct. The subject is admittedly of considerable importance, but it is also one of much complexity. It has already been under the consideration of the Irish Government, and legislation may be necessary to deal with it, but I fear that it will scarcely be possible to introduce a Bill during the present session. The matter, however, will not be lost sight of.

Constable Anderson, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the salary of Constable Anderson, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who, notwithstanding the fact of his being a confessed accomplice of Sergeant Sheridan in the mutilation of animals and the conviction of innocent men for these atrocities, is still, owing to an alleged contract entered into between him and the right hon. Member for Dover, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, in the force and engaged in the performance of fatigue duty and the tutelage of recruits in the Royal Irish Constabulary depot, Phœnix Park; what is the cost of this man in board, lodging, and clothing to the State; and under what estimate will his salary and perquisites be included.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that Constable Anderson's salary is £65 per annum, and that his entire pay and allowances, including cost of uniform, amount to £70 per annum, from which a deduction of one shilling a week for barrack accommodation is made. The constable pays for his own board. His salary is borne on the Vote for the Royal Irish Constabulary. It is incorrect to describe this constable as a confessed accomplice of Sergeant Sheridan and as being engaged in the tutelage of recruits. I have already informed the hon. and learned Member that the constable protested his innocence, and that he has no authority over recruits.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has again been misinformed. Is he not aware that the late Chief Secretary, who made this bargain with this man, stated that he was examined before a private Commission on condition that if he told the truth he would stay in the force? Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to perpetuate this great iniquity?

Mr. DELANY: What is the difference between fatigue and other police duties?

Mr. BRYCE: The man is kept at the depot. I have already answered these Questions fully and can add nothing.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): Does fatigue duty include moral instruction?

Royal Irish Constabulary Inspectors.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many county inspectors, Royal Irish Constabulary, have been appointed since November 29th, 1901; how many of these were Catholics; is it the case that six vacancies will occur this year; and will Catholics be excluded from promotion as heretofore.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that since November 29th, 1901, eleven first-class district inspectors have been promoted to the rank of county inspector. None of these are Catholics. I understand that several vacancies will occur this year, but I cannot say how many. The vacancies will be filled by promotion, according to seniority, of suitable officers from the list of first-class district inspectors, totally irrespective of the religious body to which they may belong.

Gun Licences in County Tipperary.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that Mr. Jeremiah O'Dwyer, district councillor, of Mohouragh, Cappawhite, county Tipperary, was refused a gun licence by the local resident magistrate, Mr. H. Turner, without any reason whatever being stated, and, seeing that Mr. O'Dwyer is a farmer who needed a gun-carrying licence so that he may be in a position to protect his crops from vermin, he will recommend that the granting or refusal of such a licence shall henceforward be vested in the local bench of magistrates.

The hon. Member complained that the words "a man of undoubted respectability," which appeared in the Question originally after Mr. O'Dwyer's name, had been struck out.

MR. BRYCE: The power of granting licences in a proclaimed district under the Peace Preservation Act is vested by Order in Council in the resident magistrate for the district. I do not think it would be judicious to make the alteration suggested in the latter part of the Question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Will the right hon. Gentleman introduce legislation to remove from the Statute Book this remaining Coercion Act?

MR. BRYCE: I do not think it can properly be described as a Coercion Act. I cannot make any statement without notice.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: Is a man to be denied the right to protect his property?

MR. BRYCE: I know nothing as to the facts.

MR. CULLINAN: Is it not the fact that at the recent assize the Judge was presented with white gloves?

MR. BRYCE: I believe so.

MR. LUNDON said he should like also to vouch for Mr. O'Dwyer's undoubted respectability.

Mineral Rights on Irish Estates.

MR. SHEEHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has come to any decision yet as to securing powers for the Estates Commissioners to sell on lease the mineral rights vested in them in the estates purchased under the Act of 1903, so as to enable minerals, where obtainable, to be worked; and, if so, what does he propose doing.

MR. BRYCE: This matter, which is no simple one, is still under consideration, and I am hoping to receive shortly the views of the Land Commission. I cannot yet make any statement in the matter.

Fire-arms in Proclaimed Districts.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the month of October, 1904, the police at Fintown, county Donegal, seized a new gun belonging to a young man named James Walsh; whether there is any reason to suppose that the gun was intended to be used by Walsh for any improper or illegal purpose; whether this man has made repeated applications to have it restored to him, and whether applications have been refused; and, if so, will he now order that the gun shall be delivered to Walsh without delay.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that in October, 1903, the gun in question was seized by the police because Walsh was carrying it in a proclaimed district without a licence. It is not alleged that Walsh had the gun for an illegal purpose. He has made one application for its return to him, which application was refused. Under the Peace Preservation Act, a gun so seized becomes forfeited to the Crown; but if Walsh should obtain a licence under the Act the gun will be restored to him.

County Donegal Proclamation.

MR. HUGH LAW: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the peaceable condition of the rural districts of Glenties and Dunfanaghy, county Donegal, as shown by the absence of any serious agrarian outrage during the past ten years, he will direct that the proclamation of these districts, dated April 5th, 1881, under the Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act of 1881, shall forthwith be revoked.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that it is the fact that the districts mentioned have for a considerable time been in a peaceable condition; but it is not quite correct to state that no agrarian outrages have occurred in them during the past ten years. I am informed that the power of limiting the carrying of arms to persons of proved good character has had an excellent effect as a precautionary measure, and that no hardship is involved in the exercise of that power, as licences are in general freely granted. I am not at present prepared to advise the revocation of the proclamation referred to under the Peace Preservation Act.

Mr. HUGH LAW: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the mere fact that this district is proclaimed when it is notoriously free from crime is resented very much—and very rightly so—by the people as a stigma?

Mr. BRYCE: Whenever the matter comes up for reconsideration, of course the facts stated by the hon. Member will also be considered.

Mr. HUGH LAW: When will that be?

Mr. BRYCE: I cannot say.

Marine Works Act.

Mr. HUGH LAW: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a Return showing the expenditure to date under the Marine Works Act, and also the works now in progress or intended to be carried out.

Mr. BRYCE: If the hon. Member will put down a Question not for oral answer, I shall be glad to furnish with the Votes the information asked for, but it is scarcely necessary at the present stage to make this information the subject of a Parliamentary Return.

Annesly and Downshire Tenantry.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission have ascertained if the Earl of Annesly and the Marquess of Downshire have withdrawn their scales of voluntary reductions for second-term rents in the County of Down; and, if so, whether the withdrawal is attributed by the Land Commission to the fact that the Sub-Commission, of which Mr. M'Connell is a member, have been giving smaller reductions than the landlords themselves were willing to agree to; and, if not, whether he can state for what reason the scale of voluntary abatements was withdrawn.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that they have no information as to the withdrawal of voluntary scales of reduction on second-term rents on the estates referred to.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Have any inquiries at all been made in the district? The matter is perfectly notorious there.

Mr. BRYCE: I presume they have made such inquiries as they could, and they tell me they have no information.

Mr. MACVEAGH: They have made no inquiries whatever.

Marlfield National School, Belfast.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Board of Education are still the referees of the Marlfield National School in Belfast; and, if not, when, to whom, and for what reason, have the Board transferred their power in regard to this school.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the manager of this school has dismissed the principal teacher. The latter contests the legality of the dismissal upon the ground that the referee who countersigned the notice of dismissal was no longer in office, and that, in consequence, the refereeship had, under the agreement between manager and teacher, devolved upon the Commissioners. As the legality of the dismissal is in question, the Commissioners have declined to give any opinion in the matter.

Mr. SLOAN: But are the Commissioners still the referees? That is the Question on the Paper.

Mr. BRYCE: There is a legal point involved, and it is not for the Commissioners to decide that.

Mr. SLOAN: It is a question of fact, not of law. Are the Commissioners still the referees, or have they transferred their powers, and, if so, to whom?

Mr. BRYCE: I have given the Answer supplied by the National Board.

Mr. SLOAN: I will put the Question down for another day.

MR. BRYCE: I presume the National Board have given the best answer they can.

MR. SLOAN: Shall I be in order, Mr. Speaker, in again putting the Question to which I have failed to get an Answer? Is the right hon. Gentleman entitled to refuse a reply?

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman did reply.

MR. SLOAN: No.

*MR. SPEAKER: Yes, although perhaps the hon. Member does not like it.

MR. SLOAN: An Answer was given, but not to my Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that whether or not the Board of Education were the referees was a legal point which had yet to be decided.

MR. BRYCE: It may be satisfactory to the hon. Member if I say I have no reason to think there is the slightest desire on the part of the National Board to keep any information from the House. If he will put another Question down, I will do my best to get it answered.

Constable Anderson, R.I.C.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the official record of Constable Thomas Anderson, of the Royal Irish Constabulary depot; was Anderson assured by the Government officials who held the inquiry into the case of Sergeant Sheridan, that if he told the truth he would not suffer in any way; if so, why is Anderson employed solely on fatigue duty and refused the ordinary police duty at the depot or elsewhere; and if Anderson has, or will be, examined for promotion, and his claims for higher rank be considered if he passes the qualifying examination.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector-General that Constable Anderson's record was favourable prior to his implication in the case of Sergeant Sheridan. As to the remainder of the Question, I beg to refer to the statement of the right hon. Member for Dover made in this House on July 23, 1902.†

MR. SLOAN: As the right hon. Gentleman says this constable's record is favourable why is he excluded from being a candidate for examination for promotion and for other privileges?

MR. BRYCE: The matter has been over and over again discussed. I cannot add anything to the Answers I have already given. If the hon. Gentleman will read the Answer to the end I think he will find it constitutes a reply to his Question.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table a copy of the District Inspector's Report?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

Sergeant Farrell—Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sergeant Farrell, who has recently been reduced from the rank of head constable for misconduct at Belfast, is about to be paid off on pension; and, if so, can he state why this officer has not been compelled, according to regulations, to serve three years in his present rank; and will he explain why Constable M'Farland, of Wexford, was not allowed to retire on pension until he had served three years in the rank of constable, after having been reduced from the rank of sergeant.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. There is nothing in the constabulary regulations which would require the sergeant to serve for three years in his present rank before being retired. In the case of Constable McFarland, the Inspector-General refused to give the statutory certificate of diligence and fidelity until the constable had served for three years in the reduced rank and purged himself of the misconduct for which he had been reduced. In the case of Sergeant Farrell, the Inspector-General was satisfied that he had served with diligence and fidelity throughout his service generally.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxi., 1071 *et seq.*

Head Constable Reynar, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the evidence of Head Constable Reynar at a police inquiry recently held in Belfast, where he stated that he had to give special protection to several head constables from time to time on the Shankill Road, Belfast; if he can give the names of the head constables referred to, and the dates on which the alleged protection was given; if there is any official record of Head Constable Reynar's reports in the cases referred to in his evidence; and, if not, will he order a sworn inquiry into the whole matter.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that the matters referred to in the Question were disciplinary matters as to which the Inspector-General has already made full inquiry, and he therefore considers no further inquiry to be necessary. It is not the practice to state particulars of the evidence given at constabulary courts of inquiry.

Royal Irish Constabulary and Good Templary.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what are the reasons for prohibiting members of the Royal Irish Constabulary from joining the Order of Good Templars; and whether, seeing that this order is entirely non-political and non-sectarian, and solely in the interests of temperance, he will consider the advisability of recommending the withdrawal of any restrictions in regard to this matter.

Mr. BRYCE: The oath of office taken by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary binds them not to join any society of a secret nature. The constabulary authorities have from time to time received evidence that the rules of the Order of Good Templars provide for secret signs and other operations of a secret nature, all doubtless perfectly innocent and even laudable. Members of the force are, of course, at liberty to take the temperance pledge and join temperance societies which are not secret, but the present Inspector-General, following the practice of his predecessors for the past thirty years, has declined to sanction members of the constabulary joining the Order of Good Templars.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Was the last part of that Answer actually supplied the right hon. Gentleman: that the oath of the policeman prevents him joining a secret association.

Mr. BRYCE: The hon. Gentleman has heard the Answer.

Mr. HEALY: Why is there a special exception made in the case of Freemasons?

Mr. MACVEAGH: Did not the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor in office state in this House that a policeman could become a Freemason?

An HON. MEMBER: Is there any real difference between Good Templary and ordinary benefit friendly societies? Cannot the police join the latter?

Mr. BRYCE: I cannot say. I should have thought men might be encouraged to join them.

Mr. SLOAN: Will you communicate that opinion to the Inspector-General?

Mr. BRYCE: I cannot interfere with his discretion. He is quite capable of forming his own opinion on it.

Birr and Portumna Railway.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE (Galway E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a Resolution from the Portumna District Council and other public bodies requesting the Government to re-open the Birr and Portumna line of railway; whether he is aware that the line had been originally built at a cost of £80,000, £60,000 of which was contributed by the public; that at the expiration of a ten years lease, which the Great Southern and Western Company had, the Board of Works took charge of the line and subsequently withdrew the caretakers, and allowed the rails, sleepers, station-house, and stores to be stolen; and whether, in view of the fact that there is no railway accommodation between Birr and Killaloe, a distance of 50 miles on the Galway side of the Shannon, the Government will take steps to have the line reopened.

*Mr. BRYCE: The Resolution mentioned has been received. The statements of fact are substantially correct, except that the line was not in the hands of the Board of Works, but of the Public Works Loan Commissioners. The line is no doubt derelict, and its deplorable condition has long been a matter of concern to the Irish Government, but a large sum of money would be required to re-equip it for work, and it is very doubtful whether there would be traffic to justify the expense unless the line were taken over by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company and worked in with their system, and perhaps also unless a line were constructed from Portumna to Loughrea, which would give a direct route of communication from the South East of Ireland to Athenry and Galway. I cannot undertake, in the present position of things, that the Government will take the steps suggested, but the whole matter together with many other questions relating to Irish Railways is engaging my attention.

East Tyrone Election Disturbances.

Mr. MacVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what action, if any, the authorities have taken against the members of the Orange mob which attacked Nationalists and injured property at Stewartstown on the night of the declaration of the poll in East Tyrone; whether, in view of the conduct of the mob on that occasion any, and, if so, what precautions were taken by the authorities to prevent the similar outbreak on March 10th; and what steps are being taken to bring the offenders to justice.

*Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that on the occasion first mentioned hostile crowds assembled in Stewartstown. Stones were thrown, and shots fired, principally in the air. A man belonging to the Nationalist Party was slightly injured in the leg by a revolver shot, and for this offence a man named Miller was tried at the recent Assizes and acquitted. Evidence was not forthcoming against any other offenders. On March 10th a force of five extra police was sent to Stewartstown. A prosecution is pending against ten persons who are alleged to have taken part in the disturbances on that occasion.

Usher Estate, Galway.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that an attempt is being made to sell to the tenants the worst portion of the Usher estate, in the county of Galway, which is situated at Garrafine; that this portion was offered about seven years ago at eighteen and a half years purchase; and that the price now demanded is twenty-one and a half and twenty-four and a half years purchase on first and second-term rents respectively; and whether in view of the fact that the portion not offered for sale contains large tracts of untenanted lands, and that the 120 acres of untenanted land on the Garrafine portion mainly consists of bog and bad pasture land, the Commissioners will refuse to declare the portion offered a separate estate.

*Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no originating application in respect of the sale of this estate has been lodged with them, and they have no information as to the matters referred to in the Question.

Enniskillen and the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

Mr. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that, on October 4th, 1904, the Enniskillen Rural District Council (No. 1), county Fermanagh, passed a Resolution by thirty-one votes to sixteen not to adopt the Labourer's (Ireland) Acts; that thirty-four applications for cottages have been submitted to the council which, under cover of the said Resolution, they refused to consider; and that in this district no labourer's cottage has been erected under the Labourers Acts; and whether, in view of the illegality of this resolution, he will say what action the Local Government Board intends to take in this matter.

*Mr. BRYCE: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The records of the Local Government

Board show that the district council referred to have refused to consider thirty-seven applications for labourers' cottages, and that no cottages under the Labourers Acts have been erected in the district. The Board are considering the question of ordering an inquiry into the refusal of the council to proceed as required by the Labourers Acts.

Gore Booth Estate, Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Gore Booth Estate, on which the town of Ballymote, county of Sligo, is situate, has been sold to the tenants under the Land Act of 1903, and that the majority of the town tenants are also tenants on the agricultural portion of the estate; and whether, seeing that the purchase arrangements have not yet been completed, and that the vendor is anxious to have the town included in the sale, and is willing to leave the settlement of price to the Estates Commissioners, the matter will be referred to the Commissioners for re-consideration.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estate Commissioners that the originating application in respect of this estate includes land adjacent to the town of Ballymote, but the town itself is excluded from the sale. If the vendor and the town tenants should apply for advances in respect of the town holdings, the Commissioners are prepared to consider whether such advances should be made, regard being had to the second Regulation of the Regulations recently issued.

Nicholson Estate, Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the grazing farm of Annagheur, comprising a portion of the Nicholson estate, situate near Castlebaldwin, Riverstown, county Sligo, and at present administered by the Court of Chancery, has been sold to a man named Merrin; and, if so, will he state the circumstances under which the sale took place, whilst the tenanted portion of the estate still remains unsold, and say why that grazing farm was not utilised for the enlargement of the uneconomic holdings surrounding.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that the estate in question is the subject of proceedings in Chancery, and I am also informed that Mr. Merrin is tenant, under a court letting, of part of the lands, but that no sale to him has taken place. The Land Judge has no jurisdiction to sell any part of the lands.

Transvaal Government—Colonial Office Morality.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now prepared to make a statement as to whether complete self-government, as generally understood, is to be granted to the Transvaal, or is it intended to reserve exceptional rights of vetoing certain measures where considered to contravene the spirit of morality held by the Colonial Office.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The hon. Gentleman asks me "whether I am prepared to make a statement as to whether complete self-government, as generally understood, is to be granted to the Transvaal, or whether it is intended to reserve exceptional rights of vetoing certain measures where considered to contravene the spirit of morality held by the Colonial Office." The hon. Gentleman will have an opportunity of returning to his Question to-morrow on the Colonial Office Vote, and I daresay he will then be in a position to challenge what he calls the spirit of morality which he has discovered in that Department.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Gill; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Howard.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 3) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. J. W.

Wilson; supported by Mr. Goddard, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 146.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that before the House went into the question of the extension of the principle of compensation for all accidents to all workmen in all classes of trades, it seemed absolutely necessary that they should deal with those preliminary considerations which made it difficult to apply the principle which the House desired of universal inclusion within the law. The matter was one which had been very carefully considered by the Departmental Committee, although they stated that it was outside the limits of reference. In spite of that statement by the Committee, they three times dealt very carefully with the question which it was his intention to submit to the attention of the House. He made no apology for raising it, because he was quite sure, as an old Member, that the reasons which led the right hon. Member for West Birmingham to raise the question in 1893 on the Employers' Liability Bill were as valid to-day as they were then. It was impossible for private Members to frame clauses in Committee which would give practical effect to what he thought would be desired by the House, and it was therefore clearly a subject which ought to be raised on the Second Reading of the Bill. He knew there were many Members who desired to raise other subjects, and no one could doubt their right to do so, but he believed the form of his Amendment was so wide, and covered so completely the whole Bill, that there would be no exception taken and that all the desired topics might be raised. He was, however, entirely in the hands of the House as to this particular debate and its limitations. He believed that the differences which at one time were supposed to exist in the Trade Union Congress on this question were more apparent than real. Personally, he should like to face that difference in order, without trying to bind anyone else, to state his own view clearly. There was a certain difference of opinion which led to the matter being referred back by the Trade Union Congress to a special Committee and that led to an Amendment in the Report. When the matter was a second time before the Congress, the hon. Member for Clitheroe expressed the fear he entertained lest anything should be done to break down the principle of the personal liability of the employer. He (the speaker) agreed with the maintenance of that liability in this country, and he wished to say so. In the modern foreign systems that principle of the personal liability of the employer was maintained, although the principle of the Amendment was also maintained. The whole of the omitted questions which were severely dealt with on the introduction of the Bill were affected. For example, the period of fourteen days, which was to be reduced to seven days, was only five or three days in most rival countries, and all those who had been engaged in the business of insurance under the Workmen's Compensation Act and who gave evidence before the Committee knew that that change made insurance difficult and raised the premiums. In the case of small trades they undoubtedly ran the risk that the employer would not insure, and there was therefore an increased risk of of defeating the very provisions which they were putting into law. In France and Belgium they had been able, by dealing with matters under the principle of the Amendment, to shorten the period in one case to five days and in the other to three days. Then in France there was no such exclusion of workshops employing fewer than five persons. It was the same with regard to shop assistants. Shop assistants were included in the French law, and no difficulty was found in such limited application of that law to them in practice as had up to now been made. With regard to out-workers, there could be no doubt that the most painful evidence given before the Departmental Committee was that which concerned women workers where the character of the trade and the nature of the employment was such that insurance prevailed to a much smaller extent than in larger trades.

The statement of Miss Sanger must have touched the hearts of all those concerned who read the evidence given before the Committee. She was asked in two long questions by the chairman and other members of the Committee what she was leading to, and she explained the French system as it affected these poor women engaged in the feebler trades, who were the chief victims of our present loose system of compensation. There was nothing worse, in dealing with this question, than to promise and not to pay, than to raise expectations which they knew they would be unable to fulfil. The Act was extended to Agriculture, but the danger of non-insurance on the part of small employers was there very great indeed, and great hardships had, as a matter of fact, occurred. He spoke in the presence of the hon. Member for Dundee, who knew of some most cruel cases in other trades. The other day—and he dared say they would see the same to-day—the House seemed inclined to bless almost unanimously the principle of universal insurance, but, having done that, to take no steps towards giving it effect. How long was that to go on? It was no new question; it was a very old question. In 1883 Germany adopted her present law. He was not advocating the adoption of that law here. It was too bound up in other laws for it to be practicable here; but in 1883–4 Germany and Austria called the attention of the world to the subject, and they adopted their admirable law from their point of view, which so completely dealt with the question for them, and which had received only unimportant amendments of detail from that time. Then the right hon. Member for West Birmingham brought the matter before this House, not on the lines of his subsequent Bill which they were now amending, but on the lines of the Amendment. He moved an Amendment in 1893 to the Employers' Liability Bill, raising this very question. He moved that no amendment of the law could be satisfactory which did not provide compensation for workmen for all injuries. He made only one exception, and he stated that he had placed his Amendment upon the Paper with a view to telling the House an alternative system of dealing with the whole question. He quoted a conversation he had had with a well-known former Member, Mr. Knowles, who had just died, a great Tory employer, who was of opinion that universal liability was the only satisfactory settlement. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham added that universal liability meant universal insurance. Within the last few weeks it had been alleged that it was too soon to bring about so sudden a change, but 1893 was a good many years ago, and it was then already alleged that the thing was premature. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham asked the then Liberal Government—

> "Why do you not take this opportunity of completing your work?"

It was answered that public opinion was not prepared for so great a change, and he said—

> "How do you know that? It is the duty of Government to lead and instruct public opinion. Opinion is making rapid strides in this direction."

That was in 1893, and yet they had had nothing in that direction, although they raised these speeches and discussions against the right hon. Member for West Birmingham in 1897 and since. They were told that the Bill of 1897 was a tentative measure, and it was suggested that ultimately steps might be taken in their direction. In 1898 France and Italy both suddenly adopted the very principle which he was now maintaining, a principle far ahead of that of 1897, of far more general satisfaction to the workmen, far more complete, and having the effect of giving far more money to the working-classes than any Bill in operation in this country or than the Bill now proposed. The late Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Lyttelton, following the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, actually went so far as to suggest that the Workmen's Compensation Act was a handicap from which our competitors were free, but in France it was beyond all doubt five times more severe than it was here. There could also be no doubt that the benefits which it directly conferred upon the working-classes went further than our own. It was carried suddenly in Italy and France, and it was a compromise—such a compromise as they might expect to get in this country—between those who insisted on the individual liability of the employer, those who wanted to make the liability as little as possible, and those who wanted to make it a matter of State insurance. Those systems had been working close at hand in Europe satisfactorily from that time to this, and the account given in the Appendix of the Report which was laid before the Committhe was the least satisfactory portion of their evidence. The French system had been working far better than anyone would gather from the account given in that Appendix. He had to make good his statement that the Departmental Committee to which the subject was referred by the late Government, although they three times stated that the matter was outside the sphere of reference, yet reported upon it very fully indeed. They were their advisers, and if he could show that beyond doubt they foresaw that this was the only possible solution of the difficulties referred to them, he thought he would have established a strong case that it should be considered on the Second Reading of this Bill. On page 123 it was stated that the subject was outside the sphere of their inquiry, but on page 121 they pointed out the danger of that defeat of the intentions of Parliament to which he had alluded in the terms of the Amendment, defeat by bankruptcy and non-insurance, and that that danger was enormously increased by every extension of the Bill. They stated that the very extensions which they recommended were themselves subject to that danger. They repeated the word "danger" over and over again, and in another passage, on page 37, they stated that they wished to utter a note of alarm and warning. They said the danger was likely to prove more serious in proportion as the operation of the Act was extended, and that there were many employers, and there were likely to be more still if the Act was extended, who would not insure or keep up their insurance in the case of small trades. It was impossible to guard against those dangers and many others unless the security of solvent funds was brought in. In one passage they added words which he was sorry to say would conflict with the views of the hon. Member for Clitheroe. They said that the difficulties, and many other difficulties, to which the present system gave rise could only be solved by substituting for the personal liability of the employer the security of a fund. Elsewhere, however, they used a happier phrase. In debating the subject before them to-day the House was only doing what its own Committee of Inquiry said it must do. The Committee used the following words—

> "Will doubtless hereafter receive the fullest consideration of the Legislature."

It was for that consideration he pleaded, though not necessarily for a long debate. The Legislature should know what it was doing, and have before it the manner in which it was going to adopt the principle which our rivals had adopted, and which they all believed this country would have to adopt. The Committee took a great deal of expert evidence on the point. The Ocean Accident Corporation said that England was the only place where they were not subject to any supervision. The General Accident Insurance Corporation used similar language, and the Employers' Liability Corporation said that every other country had law to secure that adequate provision was made for all liability under the Workmen's Compensation Act. "At present there was no guarantee whatever against insolvency in this country, alone of all the countries in the world." They contrasted this country with France, where they said things were infinitely better, and they pointed out how superior from the point of view of the workmen were the advantages given. They stated, what the Ocean Accident Corporation also stated, that of all the laws ours was the most difficult to work and the most doubtful. We had most cases on the margin; they could not be sure whether they came within the operation of the Act or not. In saying that, they only said what the most experienced county court judges had said. Many Members would remember the words of an experienced Judge, Judge Wood, who said that the law was "cruel in its capriciousness and uncertainty." The Ocean Accident Corporation said that the English law was indistinct and indefinite, and that in France and under most of the foreign laws the employers' liability was clear and definite. They pointed out that in the interests of trade and especially of employers and workmen, there should be law which should grant compensation for all accidental injuries received in, and in connection with, employments. They urged the extreme difficulty of standardising their rates; and they showed that in many cases the amount paid in costs exceeded the amount of compensation paid to the injured. The manager of the Employers' Liability Corporation was asked about lump sum commutation, and he said that in France it was prohibited. There was no such practice, and they took "a strong view that provision should be made for the whole of life." They read of the cruelty of cases, especially of young people on small wages, where lump sums were given. The system left the sufferer a burden on the community, and there was no eventual way of guarding against the danger, as was admitted by the Committee of Inquiry, except by a State guarantee of insurance. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow had said that he believed that the principle of personal liability should be accompanied by compulsory insurance in the smaller trades. Whilst his proposals might be thoroughly applicable to small agriculture, yet it might be dangerous in certain trades to increase the inducement to the giving out of work. If they specially benefited the small employer as against the large they might increase the tendency to out-work in trades of that description. His own main point was this: that by shutting their eyes for so long a time and giving the go-by to this question, they were not doing what the country expected and what so many hon. Members told the electors, namely, that they were going to work towards obtaining complete compensation for all workmen injured in all classes of trade. In this matter we had fallen into arrear as compared with other countries. Workmen's compensation treaties between France and Italy, Italy and Switzerland, and Italy and Germany were signed in 1904. Similar labour treaties were made between Austria and Germany in 1905, and between France and Belgium in 1906. Up to the present this country had not been able to come to any treaty engagement of that kind, and, therefore, they were unable to give or receive the advantages which all those States were conferring upon their workmen abroad. He appealed to the Government to give careful consideration to this subject in regard to which they were falling day by day more heavily into arrear. He begged to move.

*MR. WILLIAM McARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) said he rose to second this Motion because he was anxious to take the opportunity of expressing his opinion upon a question in which he had always taken a great interest, and because he had practical experience of the working of one of the great insurance companies. He ought to guard himself by saying that he was not speaking as the mouthpiece of any insurance company or corporation. On the other hand, it must be obvious that the House could not fairly consider this subject all round without also considering at the same time the position of the insurance companies. If by their legislation they made it difficult to insure, or made the cost of insuring high, they would defeat the purpose of their own Act. They could not consider this question from the workman's point of view alone. The interest of the workman was bound up in cheap insurance. In seconding the Amendment he had nothing to say against the Bill. He should not have seconded it had it been a hostile Amendment, or if he thought it would hinder the progress of the Bill. He was heartily in favour of this measure, which he recognised as a great advance upon anything they had had in the direction of workmen's compensation. But he felt strongly that the House should keep in mind the main point put by the right hon. Baronet. This Bill was very much plainer in language than most of the other Bills they had had. Nothing was more distressing to insurance companies or made it more difficult to fix a reasonable rate than the mysteries of language so flagrant in the Act of 1897. He did not say that this Bill was perfect, because in a good many instances the phraseology might be improved. He wished, however to point out that this Bill, as a matter of fact, gave no guarantee to anybody that compensation would be paid any more than the Bill of 1897. It gave the workmen only a claim for compensation against his employer. His firm conviction was that they would never be able to give the workman any real guarantee until there was some principle of compulsion introduced in regard to insurance. He agreed that such a principle was most difficult and complex to carry out, but until there was some principle of compulsory insurance the House could not claim that in any sense they had guaranteed compensation to a workman injured in the course of his employment. He thought the House ought to consider that it had to deal not only with good, but also with bad, employers. A good employer would take care to see that the men were properly insured, but there was a class of employer who might be described as reckless about accidents and careless about insurance, and there were also small men to whom the premium of insurance would be a very serious matter. There had always been a difficulty in getting those classes of employers to insure, and he was afraid that this Bill would increase those difficulties. There could be no question that this Bill very largely increased the scope of workmen's compensation. He was not complaining of the extension of the subjects for insurance under this Bill, because it did not really matter one straw to any insurance company or corporation what the House of Commons decided was a proper subject for compensation, because they would make their charges for any subject which the House said was a proper matter for insurance. Parliament was, however, increasing the risk of the careless employer by every additional cost they placed upon an employer, and that seemed an additional argument for making insurance compulsory at a time when they were increasing its area so very largely. It had been said that the insurance companies had been making enormous profits out of workmen's compensation insurance, but his belief was that not one penny of profit had been made out of the present rates; on the contrary, he believed that most of the insurance companies that started this business in 1897 were so misled by the figures quoted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that hundreds of thousands of pounds had been lost in this branch of insurance. Of course he agreed that there had been collateral advantages, but as regarded workmen's compensation insurance itself he did not believe that the rates charged had been remunerative. That very fact was going to increase the risk of the class he had described as not insuring. The insurance companies had had their lesson in the past and they had been gaining experience, and they now realised that it was necessary to protect themselves largely against any new risks of which they had not fathomed the consequences. He thought they would be quite justified, when this Act was passed, in charging an extra rate to compensate them for any possible lack of information, and they would certainly not be able to acquire any reliable experience for two, three, or even four years. Consequently the House was running the risk, unless some principle of compulsion was introduced, of increasing the tendency of careless employers to refuse to insure. If they had a system of compulsory insurance, he quite agreed that they must protect the person insured as well as the person injured, and he had never been able to understand why in this country any body of men should be able to establish an insurance company, and take premiums, and why the State should allow that to be done without investigation in the interests both of master and workmen. It would be a great benefit if the Government insisted upon the assets and the working of these companies being fully inquired into. He could not imagine any respectable insurance company objecting to any kind of an inquiry that any Government official wished to make into its position, and he should like to see a schedule made so that both employers and employed might know that they were secure. He thought the time had come when the House in dealing with insurance matters might swallow the whole cherry at one bite instead of two. He hoped the Government would consider whether it was not possible to include workmen of all kinds in this Bill. That was a matter which he pressed in the interest of those who were engaged in the insuring of the workmen. What was the position in which the insurance companies would be placed? In the first place, by this Bill Parliament would greatly enlarge the scope of insurance, and in consequence of that, for three or four years, while they were getting experience of its working, the insurance companies would not be able to tell what the new conditions were likely to cost. Having to conduct their operations on business lines, they would make themselves safe in regard to premiums until they were satisfied from experience what were the fair premiums to charge. Therefore they would embark on a series of years in which the payments would be more or less indefinite, and, he admitted, larger than at present. Four or five years hence they were going to have another Bill to complete the work commenced by this measure. It might possibly be a universal insurance Bill, and the people engaged in insurance would have to go through another period of years endeavouring to find out from experience the cost of the business. During that period they would probably charge more than they need charge in order to make themselves safe. It appeared to him that in the interest of all concerned, and with a view also to the practicability and the smooth working of the Act, it would be a good thing if the Government could make up their minds to go a step further and complete the whole process of workmen's compensation under this Bill. It would be a good thing both for employer and employed if it were made quite clear for good and all what the new liabilities were and what they would cost. He said this with no sort of hostility to the Bill. If his right hon. friend, whose difficulties he recognised, could not make the extensions in the Bill which he wished he would heartily support the measure. The Bill was a great improvement on anything that had been brought in up to now, but it might be made a little better, and he hoped his right hon. friend would see his way to improve it.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House desires such recognition and guarantee of insurance as to prevent the defeat of legal expectation of compensation created under the Law'—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. BELL (Derby) said the speech of the hon. Member for the St. Austell division was as interesting as any he had ever heard on the subject. The question of insurance with which the hon. Gentleman dealt was a very important one in connection with workmen's compensation. The representatives of the workmen could only speak of the experience they had had of the operations of the insurance companies, and of the fact that the companies had not come up to their expectations. If they carried out the proposal which had been made that there should be compulsory insurance he believed they would be able to get over the difficulty they had now in dealing with the insurance companies. He had had some experience in regard to this, and he found that generally employers hid behind the insurance company and the insurance company hid behind the employer. If there was insurance connected with the Government, or under some supervision of the Government, he ventured to think that they would not have the many difficulties they had now to put up with. He instanced a case which came before the county court judge at Wakefield on the 23rd of last month. A miner had been off work for eleven weeks. The man was anxious to return to work. In fact for a time when he went for his half wages he was almost insulted by some of the minor officials; they taunted him, and asked him how much longer he was going to stay off work. He pressed his doctor to allow him to return to work before he was quite fit. He had to sign a document when he returned to work, and, being unable to read or write, he believed it was a document of the kind which he had signed weekly for his wages. Having returned to work he had a few days afterwards to go off again from the effects of the same accident. When he renewed his claim for compensation he was refused, and it was stated he had signed himself off entirely and that he was not entitled to compensation. When the matter was discussed at the county court the judge thought that on the whole the man did not understand the document he was asked to sign. The document was of a kind which was very often used by railway companies, and it provided for the full discharge of the claim when a certain sum had been paid. A document of that kind was read out to the man by one of the officials, and it was read out with the object that the man should not thoroughly understand what he was asked to sign. He certainly thought that in view of this kind of treatment the workman was entitled to some protection. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to introduce some words into the Bill which would prevent any workman from being trapped into signing a document of that kind. He thought they should endeavour by this Bill to remove all kinds of opportunities for placing disabilities in the way of those entitled to compensation. He was satisfied that the Government intended by this measure that those to whom it applied should receive the compensation to which they were entitled. He objected most strongly to the attitude taken up very often by employers' agents in depriving men of that which they were rightly entitled to. He was not going to conceal the name of the offender in this instance. It was the Caledonian Railway Company. It had a very insidious habit of bringing intimidation to bear on the employees. The company insisted on employees asking permission to give evidence when it was proposed to call them as witnesses in cases where compensation was claimed. In a recent case which came before the courts, a firm of solicitors in Glasgow were refused permission to take precognitions, and they brought the matter before the judges. Their Lordships spoke very strongly on the matter. The result was that the company had now issued a general notice to all their officials directing that precognitions were to be given only under special authority and in the office of the company's solicitor. That was manifestly unfair, and ought not to be permitted. If a man met with an accident and it was necessary to get the evidence of others in support of a claim for compensation it was right and proper that the solicitor, acting on behalf of the claimant, should get such information as he required without having to take the precognitions of the witnesses in the office of the company's solicitor in the presence of any official. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would put something in the Bill to prevent intimidation of that kind. Amongst the matters which would have to be discussed in Committee were the claim that payment should be from the day on which the accident occurred, and the proposal that employers of five men and under should not, as the Bill at presented provided, be exempted from liability. He hoped that he and his friends would be able to bring forward sufficient argument to get their claims in these respects conceded. They wanted to remove these objections and protect the workmen in all cases in which he was entitled to compensation. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the matter he would find that Clause 5 of the Bill wanted strengthening. There was a case in which a workman was employed by a firm which insured their employees. An accident happened to the workman and the firm ought to have given notice to the insurance company in terms of the policy within seventy-two hours. The firm, however, omitted to give that notice in the time prescribed. The firm went into liquidation, and by the time the claim came into court the insurance people denied liability, and they were successful on the ground that notice of the accident had not been given to them within the stipulated time. Clause 5, he thought, could be strengthened a little so that any omission on the part of the employer to give notice to the insurance company, if the case was a good one, should not be held as disqualifying the injured workman for receiving compensation. He was at one with the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division in saying that this Bill ought to cover all workpeople whatsoever; and until that was done the question would be agitated in this House and the country. It was unfair that many of those who might be described as workmen were excluded from the benefits of the Bill. Let them take, for instance, clerks. He knew of many firms and railway companies whose clerks had to do all sorts of work outside their office other than clerical duties. He knew railway companies whose booking clerks had to come out of their office to collect tickets, and in order to do so had to cross the line. If these men were knocked down and injured or killed, they or their representatives would be exempted by this Bill from compensation. Clerks in the goods department on many railways had to do a great deal of porters' work; and at such places as Dover and Newhaven they had to assist in transferring passengers' luggage to and from the steamers. These men were called clerks, but if they were called porters they would get the benefit of the Bill. He would suggest that all these classes of workmen should be included in the Bill, so that all the difficulties pointed out by the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division as between employers, workmen and insurance companies should be settled once and for all. The question of compulsory insurance must receive attention if not now, at least within the next few years.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I think it would be in accordance with the feeling of the House that we should take a discussion on the Amendment made by my right hon. friend and then a general discussion on the main question of the Second Reading. I have no complaint whatever to make of the Amendment of my right hon. friend. In my opinion it is a most proper Amendment to move in order that the issue he has raised should be considered and discussed and if possible to get from the Government some definite declaration of sympathy with the Amendment. But with regard to what my right hon. friend and my friend the hon. Member for St. Austell have said, I have to point out that while it is true that in many cases foreign nations have been in advance of this country, both in regard to schemes of compensation to workmen injured, and to the general question of insurance, foreign countries have not yet solved the difficulty of the small employer in relation to a national scheme of insurance. The fact of the matter is that the wider you extend the scope of what we call the principle of workmen's compensation, the greater is the urgency you create for some system of insurance to guarantee the position of those entitled to compensation; and the more difficult it is to provide any real and satisfactory scheme of general insurance, national or otherwise. I pass over the speech of my hon. friend the Member for Derby, because the points he raised referred to our Committee work; but in regard to his first point I would draw his attention to paragraph 8 in the first Schedule, and perhaps if he would be kind enough to look at it he might satisfy himself that it meets his case. My hon. friend the Member for St. Austell, who delivered a most friendly speech in relation to the Bill, said: "Why avoid taking one plan? Why should you not tackle the question now so as not to force on the insurance companies the necessity of revising their system from time to time, and putting them to trouble and expense?" I would submit to the House that under the circumstances it has been, and is, impossible for the Government to deal on this occasion with this question of national insurance. As the House is well aware, the time at our disposal was somewhat limited; but apart from that, it is, I submit, inadvisable to deal with this very important question without further inquiry, more particularly as my right hon. friend has pointed out, because the Departmental Committee did not deal with it—in fact it was practically beyond their reference. We admit that there is no finality in this scheme. There is no finality in any European scheme. We all admit that some scheme of compulsory insurance will eventually be necessary. I want the House to consider that there are a variety of questions that must be considered if you are to provide a scheme of national insurance. First of all, there is the question of the personal liability of the employer. My right hon. friend says he is desirous of maintaining that liability; and I believe that is the view of hon. Gentlemen on the Labour Benches opposite. I think that is a good principle, and I agree with it; but there are a great many people who have other views on the subject. Then, what would be the form of compulsory insurance? Would it be a form which requires employers to insure in existing companies, or would the Government undertake the whole management, the procedure and administration of this insurance themselves, and to what extent? Then, how far do you propose to go? That is to my mind all important. I have already pointed out to the House that European countries under their present schemes have not solved the difficulty. Take France, which has more recently than any other country dealt with this question. France has not really faced the question of the small employer, and under the present law shopkeepers are not included.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I think they are.

*MR. GLADSTONE: It all depends upon the construction of the words of the scheme. Apart from that, the French Government have gone on the principle of organised industries. They have for the most part limited themselves to trades that are distinctly risky and are largely and well organised. There are other countries—Belgium, Austria, and Germany—which exclude large numbers of workmen from the operation of the compensation law. I have the figures from the Report of the scheme in Germany for the year 1902. According to that Report, there are no less than 2,000,000 persons engaged in employment who do not come within the compensation law, and are consequently uninsured. It is quite clear that the Germans have not solved this question any more than France has done, and, having expunged from the operation of the Bill clerks and shopkeepers' assistants, I would ask whether we are expected to bring in another Bill this session dealing with the question of national insurance—a system of national insurance which, I suppose, will subject to a penalty all persons who employ workpeople, whether men or women, and all those who employ domestic servants. This is a very difficult matter. There are some millions of persons employed in this way, and what are we to do with them if we assent to the proposal which is now made? This is a very important question. I do not know whether my right hon. friend is ready with a solution, but it is obvious that these matters must be gone into before action can be taken. One of the most difficult questions, and I should like to hear some hon. Member who is acquainted with it speak upon it, is the system of inspection of insurance companies. An hon. friend of mine who was connected with insurance companies said that they would welcome such an inspection, and if you passed a system of compulsory insurance, you would have to set up such a system of inspection. Then, in addition, you would have to consider what your standard of stability should be for the insurance companies doing workmen's compensation business. Then there is the question of the danger tariff. That will have to be considered. The question of the danger tariff occupied the German Government for a very considerable time. It took them a long period to draw up that tariff. You will not do that in a week, a fortnight, or a month, because it is a very important matter, needing very careful consideration, as you must proportion your premiums to your risk. Then I should like to know how you propose to deal with insurance companies doing business under the Act with whose financial stability you are not satisfied. That is a difficult question, and all these matters, of which there are a great many, will have to be examined.

Then I come back to what is being done in European countries in regard to which my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean quoted cases. I would like to point out to the House that, although it is perfectly true that many European countries have what to them are perfectly satisfactory systems of national insurance, yet those systems are founded upon the particular conditions prevailing in those countries, and which do not necessarily prevail here. I would take a case where they have a system of compulsory insurance regulated by the State, but there the whole of that system is founded upon the ancient guilds of Germany which are now turned into trade and industrial associations. They are more than a hundred in number, and all these trade and industrial associations are exercising many important functions. The whole of the duty, or at least the greater part of the duty, of administering these funds devolves upon them. You have here a vital difference between their system and their methods and ours. You have in Germany a sick fund to which the workman contributes two-thirds and the employer one-third. That sick fund is liable, if an accident takes place, for a period of no less than thirteen weeks. And what is the upshot of that? I will give the House the statistics in regard to workmen's insurance. The employers pay 45·20 per cent., the employees 37·64, the State subsidy is 6·43 and the interest on invested funds is 10·73. Those are the figures which apply to the general compensation of workmen, so that the House will see that because of these large contributions of the workmen to the sick fund, and in consequence of this sick fund being brought into operation for thirteen weeks before the other compensation becomes payable, the problem is rendered less difficult, especially when it is considered that according to these figures the workmen contributes no less than 37·64 per cent. That is a system which belongs to Germany, and my right hon. friend held up the example of France and others in favour of national insurance, but you cannot expect us, with our methods and our system, to adopt the German system. I should be very sorry for myself, or for any Home Secretary who stood here, if his Bill contained such provisions as I have indicated. Going on to the case of Austria, you find that she has followed in the steps of Germany, but there the employers take 10 per cent. from the wages for compensation, and there again you have a sickness insurance in the same way as with the Germans, but it is not thirteen weeks, but only five weeks during which it is paid before the other compensation becomes payable. Then you have the case of Italy, which is very cautious, but which seems to be forming a system which it may be well worth our while to consider when we come to examine into this question. Italy has also adopted the system of compulsory insurance. Their system seems to be a compromise, however, between the voluntary and the compulsory systems. I think my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean mentioned it. It allows the employer to insure in the national bank, and it allows the railways to have their own fund. It also allows employers and employees to have their own mutual fund, all these various funds of course being administered under Government jurisdiction. As regards France, she has not really adopted compulsory or State insurance as I understand it, although she has established a State fund. I could go into the systems in force in other countries, but I think I have stated enough to show that there is is a great deal to be considered before you definitely decide what system of insurance you are going to have. When you come to realise what great difficulties have confronted European Governments in building up their schemes, and you see how cautious they have been, and how from time to time they have amended those schemes before they reached finality—if they have reached finality—it is quite clear that if I, or anybody far more competent to deal with this question than I am, held out any hope that it was practicable or within the Government's power at the present moment to deal with this question of national compulsory insurance, it would be illusory. I agree that the principle of compulsory insurance, whether it is in the form adopted by France, that of a central Government fund or a national bank guarantee, like Italy, or whatever form it takes, is a principle which we believe is the right one, and must as soon as practicable be adopted as a general solution of the question. Therefore, Sir, I can assure my right hon. friend, on behalf of the Government, that we are in full sympathy with the principle of his Amendment, and I see no reason why there should be any delay—certainly no unnecessary delay—in opening up a practical inquiry into the question of a general scheme of compulsory insurance. Whether it should be done this year or next is a matter for consideration. All I can say is that the Government are ready to look into the matter with the intention of adopting the principle embodied in my right hon. friend's Amendment, viz., that the workmen, having been given the right to compensation by the Statute, shall as far as possible be guaranteed that compensation when he meets with an unfortunate accident.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) rose to address the House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked whether the hon. Gentleman would prefer to speak upon his Amendment, or upon the general question of the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. COCHRANE said he would prefer to speak upon the question of the Second Reading of the Bill.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he would not withdraw the Amendment, but in view of the speech of the Secretary of State for the Home Department he would allow it to be negatived. He felt that the Secretary of State had said as much as was possible, having regard to the circumstances of the case.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. COCHRANE said the discussion had moved round the most important question raised by the right hon. baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, but no doubt there were other important points contained in the Bill which were of great interest, and which it was desirable to discuss. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had criticised the details of the various schemes in force in foreign countries, and had expressed the general sympathy of the Government in favour of a system of general compulsory insurance, but his argument seemed to be, when it was based upon the action of France, rather against the form which he had himself adopted in this Bill. The right hon. Gentlemen had also alluded to the German scheme, and he appeared to find fault with the deductions from the workmen's wages which it involved. No doubt that was a point which everybody was prepared to challenge, but would the right hon. Gentleman himself be prepared to say that no part of the cost of compensating workmen should fall upon the wage fund of the workers of this country, as of course to some extent it did now fall? It had been a great inconvenience to the House that a longer period had not been allowed to elapse between the introduction and a Second Reading of this Bill. The measure was one of great complexity and considerable length; it contained seventeen clauses, each of which was almost a Bill in itself. It was introduced on March 26th and not printed until March 30th. And with the greatest diligence they had been able to exercise it had been almost impossible for those interested in this measure to realise its scope. He complained that the time had been too short to enable Members to consult those in their constituencies who had full knowledge of the various points dealt with. He could not help thinking that for some occult reason they were being rather rushed in this matter. It might be that the exigencies of measures connected with education had made the Government anxious to interpose a non-contentious and non-Party Bill at this stage. There were many questions of principle involved. Most Members had seen the interesting letter which recently appeared in *The Times* from Sir Andrew Noble, who might be considered a model employer, with regard to the proposed reduction of the fourteen days. In that letter Sir Andrew Noble had given several concrete instances from his own wide experience, and everybody was agreed that if the Government did reduce the period which had to elapse before compensation was to run it would greatly add to the cost of compensation. The Bill included at least three Bills within its four corners. There should, in his opinion, have been a Bill specially applicable to seamen and another specially applicable to diseases of occupation. No one would suggest that there was no room for the amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act. There was ample room, and now was the opportunity of his right hon. friend to perfect that Act. He must indeed perfect the law in such a way as to make it a model to foreign countries instead of allowing it to lag behind. He had a vast and willing majority in the House; he had no hostile opposition, and he had the experience that had been gained upon this subject both at home and abroad. This Bill halted midway between the two roads to perfection. It was either too large or too small; it added to the number of those who had to be compensated, without providing for any of those safeguards which the Departmental Committee recommended to the House. It included seamen under various conditions. Foreign and home trade alike were treated in this Bill. Seamen engaged in the coasting trade in small vessels, seamen in Atlantic liners, and seamen in fishing boats all came within the scope of the Bill, regardless of the fact that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Bill he introduced made special exemptions in the case of small trading vessels and fishermen. The hon. Member for Middlesbrough, himself an expert in these matters, was convinced in the Committee that under certain circumstances it was desirable to exclude small vessels. Special consideration was necessary when dealing with small vessels. The right hon. Gentleman had departed from the principle laid down by his predecessors, the principle of the gradual extension of the Act so as to include trades, occupations, and industries, after investigation, in such a manner as to meet the circumstances of each. The right hon. Gentleman went far beyond "individual" industries. He included all with a few exceptions and without any safeguards whatever. The Departmental Committee had warned the House that it was important that no inclusion should be made of any particular industry or employment without full inquiries having been made as to the particulars of the employment to be included. No inquiries had been made in regard to the industries to be included in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had simply hastily thrown together a number of provisions, no doubt desirable in themselves, without having considered what safeguards were necessary in the interests of each particular industry, and the House was left without the evidence to form a conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of

Dean had been, both in his Amendment and his speech, consistent. The Government had departed from the policy of the late Government, which was a policy of inclusion bit by bit. They had gone step by step.

*MR. GLADSTONE: You included agriculture.

MR. COCHRANE: That was step by step. And the late Government had full knowledge of the subject of agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman had reversed that policy. He had included the large employers and the small employers: the wealthy and the struggling, the village mason, the man who built carts and wagons, the blacksmith, the well-sinker, and all the other trades with which they were familiar in the country. Suppose an accident happened from a fall resulting from working some machinery in one of these small employments, and the man injured claimed. What would happen? That small class of employer was not acquainted with the peculiarities of insurance and he would in many cases fall a victim to the wiles of bogus insurance companies. They would put before him impossible schemes of insurance and after paying for two or three years the man would find that he had lost the premiums he had paid. On the other hand, a large number of small employers would not insure, and what would be the fate of the workman injured? The expectation was held out to him by this Bill that he was entitled to compensation, and the Government took no steps to see that the company in which the master insured was solvent. Therefore there was no guarantee that the man injured would get his compensation, and the small employer who had done his best to insure against accidents would be ruined. That was a serious blot upon the Bill. Looking at the figures and the admirable memoranda of Sir Kenelm Digby, he could not take the view of the right hon. Gentleman that the interests of the small employers had been safeguarded.

*MR. GLADSTONE: They are not included.

MR. COCHRANE said he failed to understand what the right hon. Gentleman meant by that remark.

*MR. GLADSTONE: There are limitations.

MR. COCHRANE: The Report said that provisions of the nature of those in force in Norway were also in operation in Italy. There were such widespread districts as Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and Belgium, and in all those countries they found some provision to safeguard the interests of the worker and the small employer. Not only the amount of compensation, but the security of the compensation had to be considered. It was quite true that a small employer, if one of his men met with an accident, could be made a bankrupt, but he did not know that that would be altogether in the interests of the worker or of the country. What they wanted to secure was that compensation should be as certain as possible. The Bill did not apply in a case where the employer proved that the number of workmen employed by him at the time of the accident did not exceed five, unless the accident was attributable to the use by the employer of machinery driven by steam, water, or other mechanical power. Why had the right hon. Gentleman limited the number to five? The restriction of numbers in the Bill of the late Government only applied to workshops. Why copy what the right hon. Gentleman might regard as a bad precedent? The right hon. Gentleman had removed other arbitrary distinctions, and why did he introduce this limit of five? Why did he not copy the late Government's good example, if he desired so slavishly to imitate them, and make it one as in the case of agriculture instead of five? Then, again, why had the right hon. Gentleman excluded clerks? They were often engaged in labour that differed very little from that of other workers.

*MR. GLADSTONE: Is the hon. Member in favour of their inclusion?

MR. COCHRANE said he was, but what he wished to say was that——

*MR. SPEAKER: I would suggest that the more usual way is followed, allowing each Member to speak in turn.

MR. COCHRANE said the right hon. Gentleman certainly endeavoured to raise a good many points all in one breath, but he was sure he did not do so with any desire to embarrass him in placing his personal views before the House. The right hon. Gentleman asked him if he was in favour of the inclusion of clerks. It reminded him of the heckling to which they had all been subjected recently. What he wished to say was this: the right hon. Gentleman had departed from the principle the late Government laid down, which was to include trade by trade, and industry by industry, making provision for each case as they went along. But, holus bolus, the right hon. Gentleman included all, and only excluded a few special cases, and in each case he asked the right hon. Gentleman why he excluded it, and in what way did it differ from those included in the measure? The man who brought coal to the door was to receive compensation if he met with an accident, but not the maid-servant if she met with an accident in carrying the coal upstairs. All these anomalies the right hon. Gentleman had let himself into by the form in which he had brought forward this Bill. The Bill gave a premium on the most undesirable form of work. It was far better that the system of out-work should be encouraged as little as possible, but if because a man were an out-worker he was not to be compensated if he met with an accident, it was giving a distinct premium on the sending out of work, instead of having it performed in a properly ventilated, sanitary, and inspected workshop or factory. Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman had included seamen and almost every class, why had he excluded soldiers and sailors, who were among the most deserving classes? He did not refer to accidents in war, but where in peace time soldiers and sailors were engaged practically in civilian employment, such as gardeners, grooms, engineers, and builders. Sailors worked in dockyards on ships alongside civilians, and why should not the former as well as the latter get compensated if they met with accidents? If an accident happened on a trial run and the ship was lost, compensation was obtained in the case of the men employed by the civilian employer, but not in the case of the naval men. He hoped it was not that the soldiers and sailors were excluded because they had no trade union. It was extremely hard to leave out a deserving class of men who only received in case of accident an absolutely inadequate gratuity, and not even that as a right given by Parliament. It was extremely difficult where soldiers and sailors had not public opinion at their back to advocate their cause with any success. As regarded this Bill generally they must all regard it, he thought, as being a Bill of the very greatest importance. It was full of difficulties. The reduction of fourteen days to seven days would alone give rise to a great deal of discussion. The introduction of many trades and industries would also lead to a considerable amount of debate, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not in any degree curtail the opportunities which the House ought to have for giving the very fullest consideration to a measure of so much importance, and which met with so much sympathy on all sides of the House.

*Mr. MONTGOMERY (Somersetshire, Bridgwater) asked the indulgence of the House for a few moments while he put before them the point of view of the employer. He wished to give employees the fullest measure of security, but at the same time the employer was entitled to know what amount of compensation he had to pay. At the present time he did not know. Unfortunately, he was one of those small employers of labour who, when the Act was introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, joined with others in forming a mutual insurance of their own. He was sorry to say the speculation was a very bad one. They paid away a large sum in the first place in endeavouring to ascertain what the Workmen's Compensation Act meant. They had to fight a number of cases and he was very much inclined to think that the ambiguity of the Act was a God-send to half the solicitors and barristers of this country. They had to defend a number of claims that ought never to have been brought. There were legal gentlemen who sent touts to the hospital in which an injured man was, telling him that if a claim were preferred under the Employers' Liability Act instead of under the Workmen's Compensation Act the solicitor would be able to get a very much larger sum. As very often happened, the man was persuaded to make a claim under the Employers' Liability Act. He knew of an instance where a man had a sprained ankle, and they were willing to pay compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, but the tout at a hospital got hold of the man, and a claim was made under the Employers' Liability Act. In the end the jury gave a large sum, with the result that the firm had to pay £400 for a sprained ankle, whilst the man was said to be dancing a jig a few days after. He was told that the money did not all go to the workman, but that it was divided between solicitor and client. He was not sure that it was wise to give any workman a lump sum as compensation, because he was very often inclined to spend it in ways that he should not, and in a very liberal manner amongst his friends. He thought that the Act ought to cover every kind of accident that might possibly arise. He was in entire agreement with the extension of the Act, and he should like to see it extended to every form of service, even to the domestic who cleaned the doorstep in the morning. He noticed that it was provided in the Bill that if the employer could be proved to have been guilty of negligence he would have to pay a larger sum, but if the employee was found guilty of negligence it did not say that he should receive a less sum. He did not think that was fair, because what was sauce for the goose was also sauce for the gander. It had been proved over and over again that negligence was not wilful misconduct on the part of the employee. He knew a case where a man was engaged to feed a brick-making machine, and instead of putting the clay in with a shovel, as he ought to have done, he used his foot. On one occasion his foot was caught, and he lost it. He received compensation and also got a wooden leg. Not more than two months after the wooden leg found its way into the machine as well, and the man received a second measure of compensation. They could proceed against the employer for allowing the man to put his leg or wooden leg into the machine, but they should have an Act which would deal fairly between employer and employed. The House had been told that insurance companies did not make any money out of workmen's compensation. He was sorry to differ from the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division on this point, because he believed that if the insurance was on a large scale a large amount of profit could be made. A larger body of factory inspectors would be better able than anybody else to prevent accidents. If the Government would take this question up as a business and conduct it on business lines he ventured to say that before two or three years had elapsed they would have made sufficient profit to take sixpence off the income-tax and give every employee over seventy-five years of age an old age pension.

*MR. WALSH (Lancashire, Ince) said he was sorry to see that many of the most serious defects in the present law were to be perpetuated in this Bill. There was, for example, the old question of contracting out. That system had been conducted with very great heart-burning and complaint from many parts of his county, and he spoke most particularly of the county of Lancashire. He knew of one firm which had employed 3,000 hands for eight years, and not a single employee of that firm had been able to avail himself or herself of the advantages of the Workmen's Compensation Act. This applied more particularly to coal mines, and therefore he asked that the provision for contracting out—which was simply a perpetuation of the clause in the Act of 1880—should be deleted. With regard to schemes certified by the Registrar he knew that at least they should be not less favourable to the workmen than the provisions of the Act itself. Pious intentions often enough led to anything but piety, and the power which had been invested in the Registrar was practically a despotic one. It was stated that under the Act the Registrar had to take into consideration all the facts and make himself acquainted with the views of both employer and employee, but he did not need to ascertain whether a majority of workmen were opposed to the scheme or not. Deputations had waited upon the Registrar and vast majorities had signified their disagreement with the provisions of the scheme, but all that had been of no effect. The contracting out provision could only be productive of mischief to the workmen. Often employers presented and forced upon their workmen schemes which had no moral sanction, the men being in most active and continued opposition to them. All the Registrar had to do was to lay on the Table the schemes so certified. If the Government were really in earnest about giving the workmen the benefit of this measure, let them not deprive them of its advantages by any such illusory regulation as this. With regard to serious and wilful misconduct, most Members would remember what a very lengthened argument this point gave rise to when the Bill was passing through the House nine years ago, and that the intentions of the Government were largely frustrated because of the opposition manifested by large bodies of employers, notably by the colliery owners. Everybody agreed upon the point that if a man had been guilty of serious and wilful misconduct and the accident was solely due to his misconduct, the man's right to compensation should then cease. The word "solely" was in the Bill as it left the House upon the first occasion. In the case of coal-mining the industry was honeycombed with general and special rules and by-laws of the employers' own framing, these last being optional upon the management. But whilst the original intention of Parliament was being observed in regard to the rules, any infraction of a by-law was being made an excuse to prove that the workman had been guilty of serious and wilful misconduct. This arrangement was harsh enough in England but it was working with greater harshness in Scotland, while it gave the employee no real relief. A case in point occurred in his own Division. There were two men, one of whom was an official of the company, and the other a day wage hand, who was bound to act under the orders of the official. The workman was sent into a place, where the atmosphere was laden with gas, to recover the materials of the employer. The other workmen had been ordered out of that section and had been sent to another part, and it was necessary that they should have these materials. Probably through an error of judgment two of these men went a little too far, and both were suffocated, and brought out dead. These victims, at the time of their death, were endeavouring to save the material of their employers. Why should those dependent upon these men be deprived of compensation and the men held to be guilty of wilful misconduct? If a boy went for a drink of water in a neighbouring place and a fall of roof occurred, that boy would be held to be guilty of serious and wilful misconduct. The whole system was productive of the greatest possible amount of mischief and real injury, giving no tangible relief at all to the employees. With regard to making the period seven days, they were thankful to the Government for that change, fully recognising that legislation in England must proceed slowly. All the alarms of the employers had been completely falsified during the time the Act had been in operation. He was in close connection with one of the largest indemnity associations in the north, and they had given evidence to the effect that the gentlemen who were alarmed by the possibility of threepence, sixpence, or a shilling a ton being added to the cost of the coal, had found to their great satisfaction that two-thirds of a penny and never in any case ¾d. a ton was all that had been added to the price of coal in providing for their obligations under the Act. If the Government would make payment date from the time of the injury he submitted that it would not, in the case of coal, add another halfpenny a ton to the total cost. Then with regard to malingering, since the passing of the Act thousands of cases had passed through his hands, and he had valuable evidence that malingering had not taken place so much as in the earlier stages of the measure was thought would be the case. In the case of the French law, when an injury had lasted ten days compensation was made retro-active. That would go very far in reducing malingering to a minimum, while in the case of injuries lasting more than ten days, it would give much needed relief to the people who suffered from the injury, They were bound to admit that the Government had very bravely taken occasion by the hand, and it was not in any spirit of carping criticism or unnecessary fault-finding that they spoke from the Labour Benches. There was a point raised by the Home Secretary with regard to people of sixty years of age and over. He submitted that that was a most serious blot on the measure, and he was afraid that here the Government were repeating the errors that were brought into existence by their friends the enemy. It was not in any derogatory sense he used that expression, for they remembered that the Workmen's Compensation Act was given to them by a Conservative Government. Why should an old workman of sixty be mulcted in this manner at all? It was a most indefensible provision. Let it be understood that if the old workman was decreasing in usefulness, he was automatically having his wages reduced. Take the case of coal miners. He knew many men of sixty and over who were working in the mines to-day and who were capable of doing as good work as any young man. Coal mining depended on profit, and the employers made as great a profit *pro rata* from the coal sent by the elderly workman as he got from the younger workman. Why a man of sixty should be mulcted in this way passed comprehension. There was nothing in logic or in equity which justified such a provision. It might be said they were going to increase the possibilities of his employment. This was not the way to increase employment or to obtain employment for them when they were out of work. If it were at all justifiable in the case of elderly workmen, by what stretch of argument or imagination could it be made to justify payment of £25 to the dependents, or one-twelfth of the maximum allowed by the present law? At least they had done nothing wrong. They would never keep people in employment by such regulations, and even supposing they did, by what possible process of reasoning could it be made to apply to the dependents in the case of a fatal accident? There was absolutely no reason in logic, in equity, or in existing facts for this provision. He earnestly hoped that the Government would see their way to amend the provision and adhere to the existing state of things in this respect. Let them not make the future law worse than the present. They were all hoping for an improvement, but this particular provision was quite reactionary.

*MR. RAPHAEL (Derbyshire, S.) said there was nothing in the complaint which had been made as to the House not having had time to consider this Bill. It was merely the application of principles which had been sanctioned by the House for many years. Consequently he thought the time the Bill had been before the House had been ample for its consideration. The hon. Member for the Northern Division of Ayrshire, in his new-found zeal, had desired to include in the Bill certain classes who were not included by the Home Secretary. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that hon. Members on the Government side of the House would support him in his endeavours to secure a greater inclusion in the Bill. All sections of the House would congratulate the Home Secretary on the frame of mind he had brought to bear on this Bill. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to make the Bill more general and to include the other sections which he had purposely omitted. He saw no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should not have included domestic servants, clerks, and shopkeepers' assistants. Surely these were important occupations. It was perfectly true that they were not organised, and perhaps they might not be directly represented in Parliament, but at any rate they worked as hard as the other classes who were included in the Bill and they were just as worthy of relief. He certainly thought the right hon. Gentleman would have improved the Bill if he could have seen his way to include these classes. He understood that one great objection to their inclusion was the cost that might be put on employers for insurance. He believed that the insurance for the three classes mentioned would be lighter than for any of the other classes already included in the Bill Their inclusion would not add to the burden on employers, or the burden would be so slight as scarcely to be felt. He thought also that the right hon. Gentleman might have included workmen in the service of employers who did not employ more than five. If they recognised the principle of compensation they should make it of as universal application as possible. It was a hardship for the poor men who were employed by small masters if they met with an accident that they should not be on the same terms in regard to compensation as those who worked for larger employers. Therefore, he hoped that before the Bill became law the right hon. Gentleman would include the classes he had mentioned, and also the men who worked for the smaller employers. He did not think there would be any difficulty in including them. The right hon. Gentleman might commence a system of universal insurance, which was recommended by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. He had included in the Bill men who worked for small masters in whose places machinery was used, and men employed in trades which were in any way dangerous. If the principle of compulsory insurance were applied, those who were not included would be able to get the benefits of the measure and the cost would be very small. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had promised to look into the matter in order to see whether compulsory insurance could not be applied in all cases in future. He thought most hon. Members had promised to their constituents to endeavour to get compensation for all accidents in all employments. They thought they had the support of their leaders, because on no single occasion had the leaders denied the statement. The Home Secretary had stated that the time was not ripe for extension of this legislation. If it was not ripe now he should like to know when it will be ripe.

* Mr. GLADSTONE: I said the time was not ripe for compulsory insurance.

*Mr. RAPHAEL certainly thought the time was ripe now for including the three classes which had been omitted from the Bill, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that they would be included. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that he was not carping at the measure. He knew the Bill would bring relief to a very large number of hard workers and they would be duly grateful for it. Not only would they be grateful, but hon. Members on the Ministerial side were also grateful to the Government for having extended the measure in the way that was proposed.

* Sir. ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said that he, as well as most employers in the present day, was entirely in favour of extending the Workmen's Compensation Act to almost all workmen. Of course, he did not entirely agree with the Bill as it now stood, because there were many points which required consideration and alteration. He did not agree with the sub-section which provided that the time during which compensation would not be paid should be reduced from a fortnight to a week. An hon. Member had already used the word "malingering"; and although he did not wish to accuse any one of doing anything of the kind, he thought that if the time were reduced to a week there would be a much greater chance of malingering than now. If a slight accident happened to a man which laid him on the shelf for five or six days, that man, human nature being as it was, would extend that time further if he could, so as to be entitled to compensation before he went back to work. He was supported in that view by perhaps the largest employer of labour in the country. He referred to Sir Andrew Noble, who had written a letter to *The Times* on the subject. In that letter Sir Andrew Noble said that the Elswick firm, of which he was chairman, long before the Compensation Act came into force had entered into an arrangement with their workmen to pay compensation for all accidents. In 1893 the firm employed 7,000 men and the percentage of accidents was no less than 10·84. In 1897 the percentage was 14·68. All hon. Members would admit that that was a very high percentage. After the Workmen's Compensation Act came into force in 1899 the number of men employed by the firm was practically 13,000, and the percentage of accidents was only 2·12, or one-seventh what it was in 1897. In 1903 the men employed numbered 12,000 and the percentage of accidents for which compensation was paid was only 1·68. He would read one sentence from Sir A. Noble's letter, in which that gentleman sought to explain how that fall in the

percentage of accidents for which compensation was paid had taken place. Sir A. Noble said—

> "The explanation is pretty obvious. If a man meets with a slight accident, painful perhaps at the time, and if from it he suffers some inconvenience for a few days afterwards, we can hardly wonder that, receiving as he would a large proportion of his wages (or even in many cases more than his wages) he preferred to stay at home, although it might be quite possible for him to come to work were it of importance to him that he should do so."

He referred to that letter to show what the effect of this Bill would be if it became law, and the time was reduced from fourteen to seven days. The effect would be that the number of accidents for which compensation would be paid would be very much greater than now. As a shipbuilder he could bear out what had been said by the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division, that employers of labour did not really anticipate what the effect of the Act of 1897 would be. At that time the insurance companies asked them to pay 10s. per cent. insurance, but to-day they asked 20s. per cent., and for the reason that the insurance companies knew what they were doing. If the time for compensation were reduced to seven days every little accident in a shipbuilding yard would have to be compensated for, and it had been calculated on a very good basis that instead of having to pay £1 per cent. for insurance shipbuilders would have to pay £3 per cent. He put it to his hon friends the Labour Members, for whom he had a great respect, whether that would be in the interest of the workmen themselves. He said distinctly "No" and for this reason. In good times when there was a boom in shipbuilding, and the builders were making money, £3 per cent. insurance might be paid and nobody would be much affected. But during the years 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1904 no ordinary shipbuilder in this House or in the country made money; and they had to sacrifice part of their standing charges in order to keep their yards going. Of course there were certain shipbuilders who had patents who showed profits in those years, but he was speaking of the ordinary shipbuilders. Was it right that under these circumstances they should have to pay £3 per cent. insurance? The effect would be that instead of carrying on their works they would say, "This is not good enough. We cannot afford to pay insurance for our workmen at £3 per cent., which on a wages bill of £100,000 would amount to £3,000 a year." There were very few shipbuilders who would think of carrying on their works at all under such circumstances, and scarcity of employment would follow. At the same time, in cases of serious accidents, where a man was disabled for two or three months, most employers would be agreeable to pay compensation from a week after the accident occurred. As to certain diseases which were engendered by employment being treated as accidents, it seemed to him that it would be very unfortunate for an employer to pay the whole amount of compensation where that man might have been in his employment only for a fortnight or a month. The Bill, as he understood it, implied that such an employer could fall back on the previous employer; but that previous employer might not be able to pay. Possibly the right hon. the Home Secretary would consider that point and alter the Bill in that regard in Committee. Fortunately or unfortunately, he was, in addition to being a shipbuilder, a shipowner, and he represented shipowners who thought that it was unfair to drag sailors by a side wind into this Bill. They had had a Report of a Departmental Committee which sat in 1903 and 1904. That Committee fully considered the case as to compensation and also took into account the question of compensation to sailors. He must say that he was entirely in favour of the principle of compensation being given to seamen, and had been so for a long time, but he did not think it was right that it should be incorporated in this Bill. His reason was this: that sailors were not at all on a par with men employed on shore, and the question of their compensation required to be considered altogether apart from the question of the compensation of men who were employed on shore. Ships at sea were subject to many risks over which the employer had no control, and were liable especially to accidents. In many cases these accidents were of such a nature that nobody could have foreseen them and in many cases they were due to the act of God. If sailors were included in this Bill, the shipowner would have to pay in exactly the same way as if he or his agent had been in default. Therefore he said that on that ground alone sailors should be treated separately from those employed in other capacities. Another very substantial reason why these men should be treated differently from those who worked on shore was that the latter worked only eight or nine hours a day, during which time the employer ran the risk if he met with an accident of having to compensate him. But what happened in the case of the sailor? The sailor was on board ship for the whole of the twenty-four hours of the day and the night and the ship was subject to an accident during the whole of that time, and therefore the liability of the shipowner was largely increased. All these matters were taken into consideration by the Departmental Committee, which consisted of men in whom the House might repose the most unbounded confidence. It included Mr. George Barnes, the Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, who now occupied a seat in this House and sat amongst the Labour Members. It had not a single shipowner upon it, and therefore it could not have been influenced at all from the shipowners' point of view. That Committee said that the leading question raised by the evidence was whether the principle laid down under the Workmen's Compensation Act could be reasonably applied to the seaman. Another question was whether or not the machinery of that Act could be adapted to seamen and trusted to work smoothly; and the third was, if so, what Amendment could be adopted to apply the Act to seamen so as to give them similar compensation to that given to other workmen. The Committee fully conceded what everybody conceded, the principle, and recommended that effect should be given to it without delay, but they did not consider that the provisions and machinery of the existing Act could be applied to seamen for many reasons. The Report went on to state the reasons, which he would not trouble the House by reading. There was no reason whatever, if this compensation was to be extended to seamen, why a clause making a provision to that effect should not be inserted in the Merchant Shipping Bill now under consideration in Committee. That measure was under the control of the Board of Trade, and it was much more fitting that the Board of Trade should control matters relating to seamen than that they should come under the control of the Home Office. There was no chance of the Merchant Shipping Bill coming before the Committee before Whitsuntide, and there was no reason why the clause in this Bill dealing with seamen should not be withdrawn and a clause treating seamen specially added to the Merchant Shipping Bill. Shipowners were already liable where other employers were not. If a sailor fell ill on board they had to support him, and they had to send him home at their own expense. They also had to pay his wages during the whole of the time he was ill on board until landed.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesborough): That is not so.

*SIR ROBERT ROPNER repeated that it was the case. His contention was that the conditions of seamen were entirely different from those of the ordinary worker on shore, and that therefore this question ought to be taken in hand by the President of the Board of Trade and not by the Home Secretary. In conclusion he should like to say that it was a very great pity indeed that this Bill, which was only introduced last week on the Tuesday or Wednesday, should be now under discussion. He was very anxious to get a copy of the Bill, but it was not until Friday that he could get one, and no employer of the United Kingdom had had an opportunity of seeing the Bill, or at any rate of fully discussing the Bill with those belonging to the trade. He thought it would have been a very much wiser plan if the Bill, instead of being put down for discussion the day before and that day, had been deferred until after Easter, in order to give the employers of the country not only an opportunity of reading it, but of considering it. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way not to force the Second Reading of the Bill to-day, but would adjourn the debate in order that the Bill might be brought before the House after the employers had had an opportunity of discussing it. He should like to warn the right hon. Gentleman that although apparently there was not a very great interest taken in this Bill by any one in the country, it was only because it was not understood. Let the Bill be once understood in the country and the House would see great agitation. Such a thing had happened before. It happened in the life of the right hon. Gentleman's father, when a great Minister still in this House was President of the Board of Trade. He brought in a Merchant Shipping Bill, and he remembered hearing from the strangers' gallery a magnificent speech upon its introduction. But the shipowners of the country rose against it, and the right hon. Gentleman's father made short work of it. That was the last the House heard of it. The reason was that the shipowners of the country rose *en masse* against it. When he used the expression the shipowners of the country, he wished the House to understand that he did not mean merely himself and a few others. He meant hundreds of thousands of people and hundreds of thousands of voters of this country who owned shares. The same thing would happen on this occasion as had happened on the previous occasion if a full opportunity was not given for discussion and the Bill amended.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) did not think that the hon. Baronet who had just spoken wanted more time to consider this Bill, because he seemed to have gripped the particulars of it, especially that portion of it which related to his own trade. For himself, he was one of those people who had a great deal of commiseration for people in sorrow. When he heard from the hon. Baronet that he was an unfortunate shipowner he pitied him.

*SIR ROBERT ROPNER: I did not say unfortunate.

MR. JOHN WILSON said that if it would afford the hon. Baronet any relief he was willing to change places with him, and he did not think that if he did so he should be in a much worse position than at present. The hon. Member had descanted very clearly upon the position of the employer, but he seemed to lose sight altogether of the position of the workman who depended upon every day's means for the support of his wife and family. The hon. Member did not seem to realise the position of a man who found himself deprived of the means of obtaining the necessaries of life for himself and those dependent upon him. As to the time at which compensation should commence, the great friendly societies, who had very carefully watched this question and employed experts in order to safeguard themselves, had laid it down that if the effects of an accident lasted more than three days the man should be compensated. He remembered a discussion in regard to the passing of the Act of 1897. At that time he and others tried to reduce the fourteen days limit, and since then the strongest arguments had been adduced in support of the position which they then took up. The right hon. Gentleman had found out that the strongest argument in favour of this Bill was the position which those who represented Labour in this House in 1897 took up with regard to the Bill of that year. They then said that the Bill if passed would induce greater carefulness in the employment of the men. Figures had been quoted from Sir Andrew Noble which proved that, because the percentage of accidents in the trade over which Sir Andrew presided was not nearly so great after the Act of 1897 as it had been before. The hon. Member for Stockton had given data which would help the Labour representatives to enforce their contention in Committee, that compensation under this Bill should date from the day that the accident happened. The moment that misfortune fell upon a man should find him the recipient of the compensation to be given under the Act. It was too late to dilate upon the employers' misery. All that was knocked on the head in 1897. Of all the statements made that had since been falsified none had been so falsified as that of the dire misery which would fall upon the employers if that Bill were passed. Up to the present, at all events, the dire misery foreshadowed by the employers had not reached them. There was another matter which they tried to meet in 1897, and in which he thought time had proved them to be in the right. They said that that Act would be the means of a large amount of litigation. They were informed that it was passed to save litigation, but he thought an Act had never been passed in this country which had resulted in so much. He sympathised with the Home Secretary in trying to make this Bill a just one. It was difficult to build upon the debris of a structure which had had to be pulled down. If the right hon. Gentleman had started *de novo* instead of trying to patch here and to patch there a perfect measure might have been brought into the House; a measure which partook of the nature of a National Insurance Bill, under which every man working in this country for his living should have a free right of access to the funds of the nation to compensate him for the injuries he had received. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was quite ready to charge the Members of this House who opposed the Bill in 1897 with opposing compensation to working men. The right hon. Gentleman did him the honour to say that he (Mr. Wilson) was the most consistent fighter upon that Bill. He would have opposed this Bill for the same reasons. He believed the support of an injured workman should be a lien on the funds of the nation, and the sooner that came about the better it would be. That was the point they desired to arrive at, and that was the point they intended to arrive at. This liability should be a charge on the consolidated fund of the country. When they arrived at that stage they would save a good deal of litigation. He commended this Bill because it was better than the previous measure and abrogated the silly conditions which were in that Bill, such as that if a man was injured on a building thirty feet high he had to be compensated, but if he was on a building only twenty-nine feet and eleven inches high, and had a far worse accident, he could not be compensated. There was one other point. That was the question of dependents The present Act, as it stood, removed the sisters and brothers of a workman who was killed from his "dependents." The dependents of a working man were defined by the Act of 1846, and though that Act included stepfather, stepmother, stepson, and stepdaughter, it excluded sisters and brothers. He had known in his experience a case where a young man had taken on himself the position of maintaining his brothers and sisters in what might be called the time of their orphanhood and when he was killed there was no compensation so far as they were concerned. This Bill deserved commendation for altering that as well as other things. Then with regard to young men of under twenty years of age. The Act had been in operation now for some nine years, and he knew a case of a person who was now a man who was injured when he was receiving 9s. or 10s. a week. He received 50 per cent. of his wages as compensation; he received 5s. a week and was receiving it now, because he was permanently disabled. This Bill provided that 10s. a week should be paid, but he submitted that that was not enough. He contended that these matters should be reviewed from time to time, and that a man permanently disabled should receive 50 per cent. of the wage he would have been able to earn had he not met with the accident. He thought the Bill would be a better Bill if the words "by accident" were taken out altogether. No word had created more litigation than that word "accident." The word "injury" would cover everything, certain provisions being made in the schedule as to certain forms of injury which arose as a result of the unhealthiness of the labour upon which workmen were engaged. He also found fault with the hon. Member for the Ince Division for his differentiation between young and old men. Men should not be put into a category of over sixty and under sixty. He was up in the sixties himself and was still a young man, and he would feel very much injured and aggrieved if he had an accident coming down to this House or in the lobby and the people who paid him for coming here made a distinction as to his compensation, because he was over sixty. Did the Government see where their policy was leading them? This was a plain declaration that the old men were being unfairly dealt with, otherwise a separate clause would not be made for them. He could quote case after case where men had been discharged, and where there was a strong inference, if not absolute proof, that they were discharged because of their grey hairs. He urged the Government to face this question boldly and not to father the idea that men were being discharged because they were either old or weak. He would like the Home Secretary, if he could, to provide for this in the Bill. In the second Schedule there was a mention made of committees forme dby workmen and employers. In 1897 he brought a suggestion before the House that the proper and most reasonable and just way of working this Act was to work it through such committees. He would now suggest, although he was not a lawyer, that in every place where there was power given to a county court the same power should be given to the committee of workmen and employers to deal with these matters as were given to the county court. He himself was the secretary of a society which met once a month. He had in his hand the report of their meetings last year. That committee had settled since the Act came into force 747 disputed cases. They had obtained from the masters compensation to the extent of £97,488 and the cost to the workmen of obtaining that was £2,453. He would suggest to the Government that they should strengthen that provision, and insist so far as they could on the formation of these committees and their extension. His committee was formed in 1897 and it had operated since upon the lines he had indicated and had saved the masters and the workmen a considerable amount of litigation. He thought that trustees ought to be appointed by the committee to take charge of the sums of money that might otherwise be wasted. He knew of instances where large sums of money had been paid over with the result that within a few months the whole amount had been run through. He pleaded ignorance as to the mode of doing the thing, but he did say that with a committee formed they would have machinery set in motion that would conduce to the saving of very large sums. With this power given to trustees the matter would be in the hands of men who knew the people and their circumstances, and in their hands would be placed the investment and management of this money for the widows and children. He believed in compromise and conciliation. He believed that the closer the employers and employed came together the better for all concerned. He believed it was better to provide means of conciliation rather than compel parties to resort to law which created friction. He looked forward to the time when there would be a national fund out of which every man and woman injured in the course of his or her work would receive compensation. Whence came the great fortunes? Out of the united efforts of capital and labour, and the man who reaped the largest return should pay the largest quota to the insurance fund. They were told that this was provision for the wounded soldiers of industry. Let all who reaped the fruits of industry pay. The royalty owners, with their six or seven millions—who took 8d., 9d. and 10d. for every ton of coal raised—ought to pay their share towards compensating the wounded miners, and the widows and orphans of the men killed. They would take this Bill as an instalment only, until they obtained a truly equitable measure.

*Mr. CORY (Cornwall, St. Ives) said he should like to congratulate the Home Secretary upon the general principles of the Bill, although he thought there were points which might he considered in Committee. He agreed with certain previous speakers that it would have been better if more time had been given between the First and Second Readings, because there were many people interested in this Bill throughout the country who were not at all aware that the Second Reading was to be to-day, and they would have liked to consider the Bill more maturely than they had had an opportunity of doing. He agreed with hon. Gentlemen who considered that lump-sum commutation was undesirable, as the amount was often wasted, and did very little good to the recipients, and if some other means could be devised for paying weekly sums, he believed it would be of much greater value. With regard to the reduction of the period from a fortnight to a week, he agreed that there was considerable danger of encouraging malingering by the reduction. He thought that where a person was disabled for more than a fortnight, it could be arranged that he should be credited at the end of the compensation period with that fortnight. That might be a way out of the difficulty and would meet certain cases in which, under existing conditions, perhaps there was a hardship. He had received communications from his constituency with regard to the clause as to the employment of more than five men. In his constituency there were many small fishing craft engaged in the mackerel and herring fisheries which had mostly got six men, the craft being worked on the share system, the owner being very often the captain, who took a share, as did the crew. It was with great consternation that they had seen this Bill introduced, because they feared that if the crew had to be insured under the Bill it would make it impossible for the industry to be carried on, and the men would be turned out of employment. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would consider whether it was not possible to exempt them from the operations of the Bill. Many hon. Members felt that only justice had been done in abolishing the clause of the present Act with regard to the thirty feet limit, and also in including seamen in the Bill. He was rather surprised to hear an hon. Gentleman below the gangway opposite complain of the men over sixty being allowed to contract with their employers for less than the full compensation in the event of accident. He was under the impression that that was put in with a view of giving these men an opportunity of getting employment, which very often now they could not get, and he considered it was very desirable that this clause should stand as it was. He would extend that clause so as to enable men who were disabled to be brought within it. He instanced the case of a man in South Wales with a wooden leg who had sought vainly for employment all over the country. No one would give such a man work, because of the risks of compensation. If he could be brought within this reduced scale of compensation an employer might find such a man a light job at smaller wages. In regard to the case of shipbuilding yards and engineering works, where men took guards off dangerous machinery on their own initiative and contrary to the rules and regulations of the employers, he agreed that it was hard that in such cases the employers should have to pay full compensation in case of accident. It also seemed to him to be unfair that apprentices should be compensated on the same scale as fully qualified workmen.

*Mr. GILL (Bolton) thanked the Government for introducing the Bill, which was a great advance on the present Act. He was interested in the objection of the hon. Member for North Ayrshire that the proposals of the Government did not go far enough, and his suggestion that other workers and even soldiers should be included. He could promise him an opportunity of voting for the inclusion of some of them in Committee, and the sincerity of his professions would then be tested. He was glad the Government had extended the provisions of the Bill so as to include diseases of occupation. Whether those diseases could be described definitely as accidents or not the result to the workman was exactly the same, inasmuch as he was injured and prevented from following his employment. It would be necessary for the Labour Party to get the number of the diseases enumerated in the schedule considerably extended. He was glad that the anomaly with regard to the thirty feet limit and "in and about the factory" had been done away with, and that the Bill extended the provisions of the Act with a few exceptions to practically the whole of the workpeople of this country. The Clause relating to small employers was, in his opinion, a blot. So far as this Bill was concerned, the position of the workman ought to be looked at. Whether he was working for a small employer or a large employer the result to him if he were injured would be the same. He would lose his opportunity of earning wages. Therefore the Government ought to say that all employers should be included and that there should be compulsory insurance. If an employer was unable to pay the compensation, then they would have a much stronger case next year upon which to come to the Government and ask them to introduce a Bill for compulsory insurance. He was pleased that the question of average wages was to be dealt with in the way proposed by the Bill. The taking of the "average wages" for the previous twelve months and as a guide to compensation was most unfair. It had often happened that a man had been sick or out of work for some portion of the year, and the taking of the average wages paid had resulted in a very great grievance, because not only had the man lost in his wages, but in his compensation also. He thought the Bill of the Home Secretary was a very satisfactory one and one which, with a few additions and alterations in Committee, would be appreciated by the work-people of this country. With regard to whether the compensation should commence from the date of the accident, he pointed out that in these cases it was the poorest who suffered most. It was impossible for people earning 18s. or 20s. a week to put by anything for a rainy day, and that if an accident happened to the wage-earner their sufferings commenced from the first day of the accident. If it were necessary to have either the three days or the seven days, then if the accident lasted for any length of time, the payment of compensation should be made retrospective. He welcomed the clause that gave a definite amount as a basis for compensation. To his mind the question of commutation was one of the most important points of the new Bill. The commutation of an award was a very important matter. These commutations had been before the Courts repeatedly, and different bases had been fixed by different judges for arriving at the amount to be given in commutation. He remembered one case in which the County Court Judge refused to reduce the compensation below £1 a week, yet when he was asked to commute that compensation, he gave the miserable sum of £150, or only half of three years wages. Another Judge had given £300, and he had heard of one instance where the compensation was less than £1 a week and the commutation was £500. In his opinion too much discretion was left to the Judge in these matters; there ought to be some definite basis upon which they should work. He would suggest that the Judge should first arrive at what the man was able to earn in weekly wages, then he should ascertain the capital sum that would bring in an annuity of that amount; and the workman should receive 75 per cent. of that amount. He was pleased to hear the hon. Member for Mid. Durham's remarks as to minors. With regard to permanent disablement, the Bill took a proper course by providing that the cases of persons permanently injured should be entitled to come up for review, and that the Judge should then have power to award to the injured man an amount up to 50 per cent. of that which he would have earned if he had not had the accident. He knew of a case where a lad of fourteen years of age working in a spinning mill was so unfortunate as to have his arm taken off. He was then in receipt of 10s. a week and the compensation amounted to 5s. a week. He received that 5s. a week, but as the law now stood as soon as he was able to earn what he had earned previously to his accident the compensation could be stopped. He had to commute it for £40, and the lad was now going about with one arm and had got practically nothing for it. That, in his opinion, was wrong. They ought to look to the lads of to-day, who were the men of the future. The question of medical referees was a very important one. The medical referees at present were not all of them absolutely fair. He had known cases where the medical referee had been the surgeon employed by the insurance company. In those cases the work people could not have confidence in their judgment, because there was bound to be, so far as the workpeople were concerned, a certain amount of bias in regard to this particular matter. He suggested that medical referees should be made civil servants, that they should have large districts, and that they should not be permitted to do any other work. Then the workpeople would have absolute confidence in them. They would have no need to be otherwise than fair. Their salaries would be secure, and they would have good positions.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have to express my acknowledgments of the very fair, not to say generous, consideration which has been given to the Bill during the debate. My hon. friend the Member for North Ayrshire complained that we had hurried on the Second Reading. I should be very sorry if this was the case, but I think the House will recognise that for the most part the Bill is one of detail. It does not contain those large principles which the House generally wishes to discuss on a Second Reading. All those principles were discussed at considerable length in 1897, and I do not remember that there was any considerable debate in 1900 on the very important Bill which extended the Act of 1897 to about 2,000,000 men. But, in any case, as the Committee stage is certainly the most important stage for the discussion of the Bill I can undertake that the House will have plenty of time for consideration. The Easter holidays must intervene before we take up the Committee stage. My hon. friend, though he was in the main friendly to the Bill, did not hesitate to give a few back-handers at it. I was really trying to get at what his true point of criticism was, because it seemed to me that his arguments were mutually destructive. He began by complaining of the number of people who were without examination, without sufficient inquiry, put into the Bill, and then he complained of the omission of a great number of people. On the First Reading the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham came into the House at half-past five and sat down beside my hon. friend, by whom he was posted up.

Mr. COCHRANE: No.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes. At any rate I saw the right hon. Gentleman taking notes by the side of my hon. friend, and I do not know how he got his information if my hon. friend did not give it to him. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham got up and said that the Bill involved a denial of ordinary justice because it did not include clerks, domestic servants, and so forth. I do not understand how my hon. friend reconciles his position with that taken up by his right hon. friend and colleague the Member for West Birmingham. My hon. friend complained that we had cut out out-workers, soldiers, and sailors, and had introduced the limit of five. As I have said in an interruption, the limit of five was really recommended by the Departmental Committee, and was adopted by my hon. friend and the late Home Secretary when they introduced their Workmen's Compensation Bill last year with regard to workshops. If it is right with regard to workshops, I do not see why it is wrong with regard to other classes which were not in the Bill of the late Government at all. The late Government considered and the present Government consider that there is a risk with regard to the inability of the small employer to make good the payment to the workman entitled to compensation. My hon. friend also complained that outworkers had been cut out, but they were also cut out of the Bill of last year. He complained that soldiers and sailors were cut out. So they were from the Bill of last year.

Mr. COCHRANE said the Bill of last year was based on an entirely different principle. He asked his right hon. friend for some explanation why from a Bill based on a different principle—namely, that of exempting certain classes—he had excluded these particular classes who had certain claims which he had laid before the House.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: We exclude soldiers and sailors for precisely the same reason that my hon. friend did not include them last year. My hon. friend also found fault with the Government for not dealing with bogus insurance companies, but the late Government did not propose to deal with them in the Bill of last year. However, I quite agree that that is a good point. It is right that where insurance companies take large responsibilities upon themselves with regard to the insurance of workmen, they ought to be in a stable condition. Several hon. Members have raised the question of the shortening to seven days of the period which must elapse before compensation can be claimed under this Bill, and different views have been expressed with regard to that. It is essentially a question to be threshed out in Committee, but I should only like to say here that, personally, the French system has considerable attractions for me as an alternative method; that is to say, a period of four days, and, in the event of the injury lasting for ten days, the compensation to date back to the date of the injury. It is a matter for serious consideration, and when we get to the Committee stage, it will certainly receive close attention. But when I quote the French system the House must not suppose that I am going to adopt it. As to the clause dealing with aged workmen, that is a difficult matter, and I had some doubt upon it, but the clause in the Bill was recommended by the Committee. It is really a question, to my mind, for the House to debate and decide. The Government has really no very strong feelings about it; they realise that there are very strong arguments against it, and certainly they have not prejudged the question. The hon. Member for Stockton spoke rather vehemently against the inclusion of seamen in the Bill. I confess I did not quite follow the hon. Gentleman's arguments, and with all respect, I did not quite follow the arguments of the Departmental Committee. The hon. Member said that shipowners would rise *en masse* against the Government so long as this proposal remained in the Bill, but, at the same time, he agreed that the principle was right that seamen ought to be included. Really, if the only difference between us is whether seamen should be dealt with in the Merchant Shipping Act or in this Bill, it seems to me that it is no more than a difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and I do not think the hon. Gentleman will be able to raise the country on such a point as that. The hon. Member for Mid Durham spoke about representative committees, and asked that they should have powers given to them under the Bill. I would point out that under the first schedule, paragraph 22, powers can be given to representative committees by order of the Secretary of State to direct how the compensation is to be applied and invested. The hon. Member for Bolton made some comments on the question of industrial diseases. On that question I am quite ready to listen to any arguments with sympathy; but the matter is a new one, and before I commit myself to anything, I must wait to hear the arguments that may be pressed upon me in favour of making additions to those already inserted in the schedule. I maintain that these special diseases are in the nature of accidents of occupation. It is an accident when a germ attacks a man's skin or when lead-poisoning enters into his constitution. It is an accident of employment. But it is a new proposal and there are great difficulties connected with it. I hold, however, that the arguments in favour of the inclusion of other diseases in the list under the Bill may be such as to entitle us to accept a new principle, and to face the difficulties which arise. With regard to the classes which are excluded by the Bill as it stands, it is the intention of the Government to include all occupations which are at all risky, and we are prepared to do so, even in the face of considerable danger regarding the inability of employers to meet their obligations where such serious risk exists. We have therefore included dangerous trades such as that of seamen, fishermen, transport service, and so forth. We have had the experience of the Act of 1897 to guide us, and also the Report of the Departmental Committee, but in this Bill we have gone further than the recommendations of that Committee, and have included seamen and fishermen and have put in industrial diseases. All these matters open up fresh points of difficulty, and as it is the Government are deluged with questions as to the results of the new proposals which they have put into the Bill. They think the proposals to include clerks, shop assistants, and domestic servants had better come from the House. If we had proposed to include these classes, we should have had to be prepared with arguments which, perhaps, we are not altogether conscious of possessing. Hon. Members will be able to bring to the Government a mass of information which we might not otherwise be able to command. The Government are prepared to consider upon their merits suggestions as they arise. There is nothing in the construction of the Bill which will stop a full and fair consideration of proposals which may tend to improve the Bill, and there is no logical reason for excluding classes like clerks and shop assistants if hon. Members can show that the difficulties can be overcome. Take the shop assistants: you have in England alone 700,000, and you have 200,000 or 300,000 more in Ireland and Scotland—probably 1,000,000, or at all events, 900,000. Perhaps half of those are single assistants. Therefore there are some 450,000 shop assistants who are the sole assistants of the small shopkeepers by whom they are employed, and the House will have to consider whether it is advisable and safe to make these small grocers, drapers, and bootsellers liable under the Act. Many a small employer will not be able to burden himself with the payment of 10s. a week so long as his assistant is incapacitated by an accident. It is obvious there will have to be some limit. If domestic servants are also included it will bring under the Bill another 1,000,000 people, including those in the little households and cottages where a servant girl is kept. There is no reason why these cases should not be considered, but difficulties will arise with regard to them, and I hope hon. Members will have their own solution of them. That is all I have to say, and I thank the House for having listened to me. The main principle of this Bill is to extend as widely as possible the benefits of the Act of 1897, and wherever the Government can by arguments and reason be convinced that further additions ought to be made, and will, if made, be in conformity with the main purpose of the Bill, they will gladly accept such proposals.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said he wished to approach the consideration of this Bill from a different point of view to that of previouss peakers. He had no mandate to speak on behalf of the shipowners, and was in the habit of expressing his own opinions with some independence. But he had a mandate because the constituency which he represented was one of the largest working class shipping constituencies in the kingdom, and those who sent him to the House of Commons, if they did not themselves "go down to the sea in ships" nearly all of them lived by our great shipping trade. To these people connected with shipping he had explained more than once the views which he hoped to state to the House on the subject of workmen's compensation, and they had the approval not merely of those of his constituents who shared his own political views but, as he believed, of many others. He had always been a most cordial supporter of legislation based upon the principle of the Workmen's Compensation Act; and he had endeavoured, not always successfully, to get his shipowning friends to share his views. To-day he had the satisfaction of knowing that a large body of shipowning opinion was in accord with him. In 1903, before the appointment of Sir Kenelm Digby's Committee, he gave notice of his intention to move a Resolution in the following terms—

> "That this House, while approving generally of the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act to all who would be likely to be benefited thereby is of opinion that, in the case of seamen, inquiry should first be made as to the probable operation of such extension, and particularly as to whether the effect of extending the Workmen's Compensation Act to seamen, without adequate safeguards, would not be to deprive British sailors and firemen of their occupation, and encourage the employment of foreigners without family ties in this country; and further, as to whether it would not be both practicable and desirable to provide such safeguards by a system of national insurance, whereby as a condition of Customs entry all ships, whether British or foreign, frequenting British Ports should, without distinction of nationality, be made to contribute *pro rata* on a tonnage basis whatever funds were required to provide compensation, and in such manner that the burden would be shared equally by British shipping and their foreign competitors trading to and from ports in the United Kingdom."

The luck of the ballot was against him; but the inquiry which he suggested had been made, and the Committee did not recommend the provisions of this Bill. To be of much useful service the compensation paid would have to be very considerable, and if this was to be a fresh burden upon British shipping the effect would be that foreign shipping competing without such a burden would be benefited exactly to the extent that British shipping would be handicapped under the Act in its present form. What would be the natural thing for the shipowner to do under these circumstances?

Would he not prefer to employ those on whose behalf no claims were ever likely to be made? He had a kindly feeling for seamen, for his forbears had been seafaring people; his grandfather was a shipmaster who lost his life in the Bay of Biscay. He was not the only yachtsman in the House. That brought him in contact with a good many fishermen and sailors. He was therefore speaking with some experience, and he held that there was no class in the community who deserved so much that the principle of compensation should be extended to them. But the natural effect of the Bill as it stood would be to place the seaman with a family or dependents at a disadvantage and lessen his chance of employment as compared with the unmarried seaman or the foreigner. The only way to get over this difficulty was by some kind of national insurance. He thought that the necessary money might reasonably be obtained by collecting dues from every vessel which used the hospitality of our ports, and that the funds should be administered by a Government Department, like the Board of Trade. The provisions of the Bill now before the House would operate to the disadvantage of the best class of seamen. He was a steamship owner, and the Bill did not greatly concern him, but he did know that the matter was regarded as very serious indeed by some of his hon. friends who were owners of sailing ships. The House knew something about French shipping bounties, although some hon. Gentlemen opposite said bounties had not been successful. They knew nothing about it. Bounties, at all events, had been successful in putting the owners of British sailing vessels in an extremely difficult position. They found it increasingly hard to make both ends meet through those bounties, and if they were now going to put on the British shipowner, and especially on the sailing ship owner, a burden which they were not going to put on his foreign competitor, they would do something more to complete the destruction of what he was sorry to say was already very much of a decaying industry, that of sailing ships. Those ships were a valuable nursery for our seamen, and he should be exceedingly sorry if anything were done to bring further disaster upon that industry. A point which did not seem to have occurred to the Secretary of State for the Home Department was the position in which a master of a ship would be who wanted to send a boat to the assistance of those on a ship in distress. Was he to have, if Clause 8 remained in the Bill, the knowledge that if anything happened to his gallant men he had, by allowing them to do what they could to save life, brought the owners of the vessel under very large pecuniary liability? He had expressed his strong desire that a measure should be passed giving compensation to seamen, but this Bill would not give it. He did not think the Secretary of State for the Home Department had given the Report of Sir K. Digby's Committee the consideration it deserved. No one could deny the ability or the impartiality of the gentlemen who comprised that Committee. There was not the least doubt about the trouble and care they took about this investigation, and there was no sort of hesitation in the Report which they made. The Committee said that the circumstances appeared to point to the need of some system of compulsory insurance which would provide the intended compensation with complete security, without imposing an undue burden on the shipowners or the seamen. Their Report was well-reasoned and he thought was quite in harmony with what he had endeavoured to state to the House. But it was distinctly not in harmony with the principles of this Bill. [Cries of "Divide" from the MINISTERIAL Benches]. He thought he had said enough and more than enough for hon. Gentlemen on the other side who knew nothing about the subject, and who were supporting a Bill which they had never read, and the provisions of which, so far as they related to seamen, they did not understand.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

DOVER HARBOUR BOARD BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

TWICKENHAM AND TEDDINGTON ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time and committed,

CONTEMPT OF COURT IN IRELAND.

*MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) rose to call attention to the law of contempt of Court in Ireland; and to move, "That the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation." He said that this was a subject of the most absorbing interest to Ireland, and anyone who looked into the returns for the last five years in connection with commitments for contempt of Court in Ireland would at once see the seriousness of the subject. In the three years ending December 31st, 1904, no less than forty-six persons were committed for contempt of Court, and were imprisoned for periods varying from one to 516 days. For the two years previous to December, 1901, the commitments numbered thirty-nine and the terms varied from one to 337 days. It was only fair for him to say that about one-third of these commitments had relation to the Bankruptcy Court. These commitments involved interminable imprisonment—in fact, imprisonment for life, if the Court so wished, Unlimited fines might also be imposed. In their absence persons could be committed. There was no appeal. Not even the clemency of the Crown could terminate the imprisonment of persons committed for contempt of Court. Contempt of Court could not be clearly defined in common law, and its jurisdiction was derived from tradition around which a haze of uncertainty rested even amongst the Judges because it had never been defined by Parliament. What happened to be in the mind of a particular Judge was practically what the law of contempt was for that particular Court. With the permission of the House he would quote an English authority upon the state of the law. He would give two short extracts from Oswald's work upon Contempt of Court—

> "The jurisdiction as to contempt of Court and the punishment following upon it, whether by fine or imprisonment, are so indefinite and uncertain, and the mode of convicting of it, and the manner of punishing it so much more consonant with the feelings and necessities of ancient times than with those of modern days that it may reasonably be said that the whole subject of contempt of Court and its punishment ought now to be dealt with, regulated, limited, and defined by Act of Parliament."

> "It may surprise some people when they know that according to the law of England the liberty of the subject may at any time be summarily interfered with for an indefinite period, or that anyone may be fined in an unlimited amount without any right of appeal, at the will of an individual, for an alleged offence, the limits of which offence in its nature puzzles the lawyer to strictly or even adequately define."

This law of contempt could be invoked and its machinery brought into operation by an outsider and an interested party, and the Judges were bound to act. He was not making any attack upon the judiciary, because if wrong was done it was obvious that the fault rested with Parliament and not with those officials who were called upon to administer the law. Upon this point he would quote the words of an eminent statesman, Mr. Gladstone, who on October, 24th, 1882, used these words in connection with the Dwyer Gray case which was discussed in the House, and was made the subject of an inquiry by a Committee. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "I venture to intimate to the House that it is a subject which has been brought much of late into popular view both on this and the other side of the Channel, and that the Government have it in contemplation, not during the present short sitting, but at the regular commencement of next session—they have it in contemplation — and hope at a very early period to submit a measure dealing with the altering of the present law."

Mr. Gladstone then moved that Mr. Gray's committal be referred to a Select Committee. Mr. Gladstone carried out his word, and a Bill was introduced dealing with this subject. The Bill went through all its stages in the other House, but then there occurred a change of Government which left it practically out of the power of Mr. Gladstone to fulfil his promise. Mr. Gray at the time was a Member of this House, and also High Sheriff of the city of Dublin, and he had previously been Lord

Mayor of Dublin. At that period there was in operation in Ireland one of the eighty-two Coercion Acts which were passed during the last century. This Act left it in the hands of the Executive to apply for a change of venue, and, taking advantage of this, some Clare peasants were brought to Dublin to be tried. A special jury was summoned under the Coercion Act. Out of 193 of the Dublin jurors 112 were Protestants, and although the five peasants who were being tried were all Catholics not a single Catholic was allowed to sit on the jury. A prisoner named Francis Hynds was being tried for a capital offence and the jury at night stayed at an hotel where they were allowed to separate. Some of them went down to the bar, and, he was informed, drank more than was good for them, mixed up with the public in the billiard room, and indulged in other irregularities. This state of things was testified to by the personal evidence, and by letter, of a gentleman who was now an hon. Member of this House. Those irregularities were commented upon in the Press, including that great organ of which Mr. Gray was the proprietor, the ***Freeman's Journal.*** Mr. Gray, as the House would remember, was brought before Judge Lawson and fined £500 or three months imprisonment, with three months additional imprisonment if he failed to obtain bail in £5,000, with two sureties in £2,500 each. He refused to find bail and went to prison. There was a very remarkable circumstance in regard to this case. The Judge gave him into the hands of the coroner, who was the only executive officer to act when the high sheriff was not available. This officer had been previously summoned to the Court by the Crown Solicitor, who informed him that they might require some official information from him. There was a van standing outside well-known by the name of " Black Maria," by which it had been arranged that Mr. Gray should be taken to the gaol, but for some reason or other another mode of conveyance was adopted. The whole matter was reported in the Blue-books. The next case he would refer to was that of the hon. Member for North Sligo, who had received the attention of the authorities in Ireland on many occasions—as had every Nationalist who did not choose to sell himself to the Castle — and had passed a period of imprisonment under a statute of Edward III. Another case was that of Mr. Molloy, who had been transferred in peculiar circumstances from Tullamore to Kilmainham gaol. Mr. Molloy was attached in his absence, sentenced to what might have been a life term of imprisonment, and ordered to be lodged in Tullamore gaol. There was an Order in Council by which Kilmainham was set aside for those cases, and so the Governor of Tullamore gaol refused to admit the prisoner. The Sheriff of Westmeath, however, was equal to the occasion, and he struck out of the committal Tullamore and substituted Kilmainham. This was made the grounds of a Motion before the Court of Queen's Bench, and the present Attorney-General was leading counsel for Mr. Molloy. The remarks of the Chief Baron upon that occasion were very remarkable. He said—

> " Attention has been drawn more than once in Parliament to the long periods of time that persons arrested under attachments in Courts of Equity are detained in custody. Now, no such reproach—for it is a reproach—has ever been brought, or could now be brought, against this Court of King's Bench Division. The law on the subject of procedure by attachment in reference to contempt in the King's Bench Division has been clearly established, and indeed never doubted."

In another passage in his judgment the Chief Baron said—

> "It is therefore quite intolerable that a plaintiff should be allowed to procure a defendant to be committed to prison, and that he should leave him there and do nothing to have him brought before the Court. It is imperative on the plaintiff to see that the defendant in such a case is brought before the Court, and that the proper procedure is taken for the purpose of having it determined what punishment he is to be subjected to. We ought, therefore, to make an order that a writ of *habeas corpus* do issue to bring up the body of the defendant on Saturday morning. The plaintiff should have done it, and as he has not done it we will not have the defendant kept in prison."

The result was that Mr. Molloy was liberated in five days. Perhaps the House would permit him to refer to a little personal experience of his own which happened in 1889, when the late Prime Minister was Chief Secretary, in connection with the Gweedore trials at Maryborough, Queen's County. The right hon. Gentleman was then the strong man in Ireland. For ten days special jurors who were Roman Catholics were set aside, and at the end of that time, when his name was called, he addressed a few respectful words of protest to the Judge. The Judge appeared to take the protest in good part, but he was fined £25 and was assisted out of the Jury Box by a policeman. He did not desire to give any offence to the Judge; he spoke most respectfully to him, but he thought then, and he thought now, that the jury were part of the constitution. He had been summoned there, and he had as good a right to act as the Judge had. There were others of his colleagues who followed suit, and they were each fined £25. But something still more remarkable happened in the Court house the same afternoon. It happened that there was a Scotsman on one of these packed juries. A Donegal peasant was being tried on a capital charge in Queen's County by a Protestant jury. At the most solemn period of the case this honest Scotsman turned to the Judge and said—

> "My lord, I object to try a man for his life on a packed jury."

That night the Crown officials approached the prisoner's counsel and offered to take a plea of guilty on a minor charge, and the whole case terminated next morning. He commended the moral to the attention of his friends in Sligo and Galway which had lately been the happy hunting ground of jury packing, because not a case had been attempted since in Queen's County, except one of which the hon. Member for South Kildare had a lively recollection. He would conclude by referring to a case which brought the law of contempt up to date in Ireland. At present there were three Cavan peasants in Dundalk gaol. Their case, like most others in Ireland, arose out of a difficulty in regard to land. The receiver and the land grabber had put the law in motion. These peasants were attached, and they had no opportunity for defence. There was no opportunity for sifting the evidence against them by cross-examination, which was the great and potent factor in exposing falsehood and of proving truth in any case. It was stated in answer to a Question the other day that these three men were kept for twenty-two hours out of the twenty four in solitary confinement. When their friends were permitted to see them the prisoners were behind a grating in the same way as a lion or a tiger was kept in a managerie, and there was a warder present to take notes. An application was made to the Judge on that occasion for a stay of execution in order that there might be an appeal, but the learned Judge said—

> "There is no appeal."

He desired to make an appeal for these peasants who were in solitary confinement. They had asked for a trial, and they were prepared to stand a trial. He desired further to make an appeal for the liberties of his countrymen, for the freedom of the Press, and for the right of public meeting and of lawful combination which had been assailed in Ireland through the arbitrary exercise of this jurisdiction. He appealed with great confidence and hope to this Liberal and democratic House of Commons. He appealed to the Chief Secretary, but not for words of sympathy which had no effect. Lip sympathy was of no use to the three men confined in Dundalk gaol. This was not a matter where the right hon. Gentleman had to hide himself behind the Treasury. It was not a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. It was a matter in which, if he had the will, he could act. He begged to move.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said that only a few nights ago they were engaged on a discussion upon martial law, and with another phase of that same class of subject that discussion was resumed to-night. for the law of contempt of Court as it existed affected not Ireland only but this country as well, because this was a grievance which affected the United Kingdom and not one part of it alone. It affected more grievously that part which hon. Members from Ireland represented, and it could be likened to nothing more than that negation of all law which martial law had recently been correctly described to be. The Motion they were discussing to-night was not a Motion limited to Ireland in form or in substance. It denounced that jurisdiction as both arbitrary and unlimited, and it called for Parliamentary interposition as necessary in order to its definition and limitation; and inasmuch as the case was one that affected the whole of the United Kingdom he proposed to trouble the House with some references drawn from the least possible controversial channel as to the character of that jurisdiction and as to the care with which it was to be guarded. In these classes of cases the Judge was called upon not infrequently to preside in matters in which his own dignity was concerned. It was contempt of the Court or might be contempt exercised by contemptious and insulting expressions towards the Judge of the Court in his official capacity. It was quite true that his judicial capacity did not shelter him from insult of another description in which he took his chance with the rest of the subjects of the Crown, but sitting in his judicial ermine and exercising his judicial functions he was, as he ought to be, protected. He (Mr. Blake) did not deny that in the public interest the Judge exercising the majesty of the law might be entitled of necessity to some power in order to restrain offences not against himself alone officially but which interfered with or derogated from the administration of justice. Such a jurisdiction might be justified on two grounds. First from the necessity of the case it might be necessary to take prompt action, and, secondly, from the circumstance that the existence of the jurisdiction had a beneficial effect as a preventive force. While he quite admitted therefore that guarded, carefully surrounded, hedged round by such precautions as limited it to the necessities of the case, the jurisdiction to interfere by the Judge for contempt of court might be a proper part of the constitution, he affirmed that it was in its nature a necessary evil to be jealously watched and guarded by the public and Parliament and to be administered with the utmost care and deliberation by those who exercised such arbitrary and invidious jurisdiction. The proceeding was absolutely summary; it was also absolutely arbitrary. It was within the jurisdiction of the Judge to punish or to commit to prison for a time, or during his pleasure, which might last no one knew how long. It was within his jurisdiction to punish by fine. There was no jury and no official. There was no appeal as in all other cases affecting the liberty of the subject in which a jury did not form part of the machinery for the trial of the subject, so that there was no protection for the subject in deliberating any limitation of sentence, in the presence of a body of his fellow countrymen to take part in the trial and the examination of the case, or in the appeal to a superior tribunal to correct the errors of the Judge. Therefore it was clear that this jurisdiction for contempt of court might and did supersede the regular courts of justice with their precautions. It had been well said by an authority on this subject that the mysterious and undefined offence would seem to be as easy to commit as it was liable to prompt to condign punishment. It involved this wholly exceptional interference with the liberties and rights of the subject by a process which would be intolerable, and which would be found to be utterly intolerable by this House and by the community among which they were assembled, if it were exercised otherwise than with the greatest care, deliberation, and rareness, and with direct reference to the necessities of the occasion. Unfortunately, he was unable to say that it was so exercised in the country from which he came. But whether here or there it was a jurisdiction which was the growth of an earlier period of the national and social existence of the people of this country. It was a jurisdiction which had its birth in an arbitrary period, at the time when our system of constitutional freedom and our notions of the rights and liberties of the subject were not such as they were to-day. This jurisdiction deserved reconsideration and Parliamentary action just as much in fact and in theory for this island as for the adjoining island. Besides the cases of contempt of court to which he had referred there were a great number of kinds of so-called contempt to which the observations as to necessity and of propriety, so to speak arising out of the necessity for immediate action, did not at all apply, namely, where the contempt was committed, not in the court or in its precincts, but in places external to the court, and where it was not so concerned with the administration of justice that immediate and prompt summary action was necessary in order that the administration of justice might be maintained. When the act was of a kind which the law called criminal, this criminal act ought otherwise, in his judgment, to be dealt with in the ordinary courts of law, and not by the summary and arbitrary process to which he had referred. Necessity, again, was the measure of the proper application of this particular power. Necessity must be established—a public necessity—a necessity for the administration of justice, for this encroachment on the ordinary liberties of the subject. Therefore, in these cases the proceedings should be by information, or by indictment, or by whatever might be the proper method to obtain trial with a view to precautions for securing justice and for deliberation, instead of by the sudden and summary proceedings before the Judge — proceedings which terminated in punishment regulated according to law, and which left the right of appeal to the Crown for the prerogative so-called of mercy, but which was in truth part of the administration of justice. This whole business was opposed to the genius of English law. It was opposed to all those things which they held most dear. The great Lord Chatham said that the main result of the English constitution was the putting of twelve men in the box. Trial by jury, the association of the pople themselves with the trial of their fellow countrymen, and the determination of guilt or innocence, was the chief jewel of the constitution. He frankly admitted that there might be limitations to the use and the security of trial by jury. He held that in no case should there be an absolute discretion on the part of an individual Judge to imprison for life; and as to the amount of the fine he held that in no case should there be an immunity from appeal and possible correction of judgment, and he held that in no case should there be an abolition, by disuse or otherwise, of the prerogative of the Crown to intervene. He had said that in this island the evils which were possible for this arbitrary power were opposed to the genius of our whole system. It was known that here there were many laws which had become obsolete, because people had ceased to attempt to use them, because they were repugnant to the feelings of the people of to-day. They were practically blotted out of the Statute Book. Thus the operation of many utterly severe and barbarous laws was mitigated by the same circumstances and conditions. Still, where it was found that there existed this arbitrary power and that it was occasionally exercised and boasted of, it was better that Parliament should take security against its abuse rather than trust to the force of public opinion. Even here reform was wanted. He wished to trouble the House with a few citations, unpleasing though it was for the House to listen to them, from Judges who had been called upon to exercise this power, for they would have greater weight than any words of his. There was a case in the year 1861 where an attorney had previously assaulted a party in a suit within the precincts of the court after an inquiry in the Master's office, where there had been some unpleasant words between the parties. There was an application to Mr. Justice Coleridge for an attachment. He held over judgment, saying that he wished to look into the authorities. When he gave judgment he said—

> "It cannot for a moment be denied that every court should have the power and the means of protecting itself and its suitors against contempt. This is a duty of a public nature, incident to courts of every kind, and from the exercise of which the highest should not shrink, for the privileges of courts are not held for the personal and peculiar advantage of the members of such courts, but in trust for the public advantage and general weal. But if it be needful, as I admit it is, that this summary power should exist, so also should courts be careful and chary in the exercise of it. Even in cases where there is much seeming reason for the exercise of a summary power, it is often wise to pause. . . . There are many cases in the older digests and abridgments on this subject, undoubtedly of a severe and stringent nature, and such as would ill bear to be applied in the present day. In refusing this rule, however, I must not be thought for a moment to underrate the importance of preserving the respect due, or the immunities pertaining to courts of justice. If any matter arose requiring prompt interference I should not be slow to protect the suitor and to vindicate the authority of the court; but in the present case I feel that the remedy by indictment and by criminal information before the ordinary tribunals are both open to Mr. Wilton, and it therefore seems to me that I ought to decline to grant this rule in the manner in which it is prayed for."

Then Mr. Justice Willis, a Judge of the highest reputation, referring to a question of contempt arising out of the refusal to answer a question in the trial of an information for bribery, said—

> "I apprehend, however. that a conviction for a time certain, is a correct, if not the only correct, course. Such a commitment is in effect a sentence upon a summary conviction for an offence against the law. . . ."

Then there was the case of Pollard, who was a barrister in the Bahamas in 1886. In those days it was supposed that the Colonies did not understand their own affairs, legal or otherwise, as well as was done here. A petition was made to the Crown in regard to the case, and it was referred to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for their opinion. In the Report of the Privy Council it was stated—

> "That in their Lordships' judgment no person should be punished for contempt of court, which is a criminal offence, unless the specific offence charged against him be distinctly stated and an opportunity of answering it be given to him; and that in the present case their Lordships are not satisfied that a distinct charge of the offence was stated with an offer to hear the answer thereto before sentence was passed."

That view was acted upon, and the fine imposed remitted. He now came to one of the most important pronouncements on the subject by one of the most eminent lawyers of his day, the late Sir George Jessel, Master of the Rolls. In 1877 in the case *re* Clements & Erlanger, Sir George Jessel said—

> "It seems to me that this jurisdiction of committing for contempt being practically arbitrary and unlimited, should be most jealously and carefully watched."

They were not ashamed to say that they borrowed the words of the Motion under discussion from this judgment—

> "And exercised, if I may say so, with the greatest reluctance, and the greatest anxiety on the part of Judges to see whether there is no other mode which is not open to the objection of arbitrariness, and can be brought to bear upon the subject. I say that a Judge should be most careful to see that the cause cannot be fairly prosecuted to a hearing, unless this extreme mode of dealing with persons brought before him on accusations of contempt should be adopted. I have myself had on many occasions to consider this jurisdiction, and I have always thought that, necessary though it be, it is necessary only in the sense in which extreme measures are at times necessary to preserve men's rights, that is, if no other pertinent remedy can be found. Probably that will be discovered after consideration to be the true measure of the exercise of this jurisdiction."

Lord Justice Mellish in the same case entirely agreed with the principle laid down by the Master of the Rolls. That was the true limit of the jurisdiction—necessity. A judge must find that it was necessary in the public interest that this summary, arbitrary, unlimited, and undefined jurisdiction should be exercised before he dared to lay his hand on the ark of the covenant of the English law. There was an English case *re* Davies in 1888. Mrs. Davies was imprisoned for contempt for disobeying an injunction during the eighteen months from December, 1886, to June, 1888. In discharging her, Mr. Justice Mathew said—

> "It should be borne in mind that contempt of court is a criminal offence, punishable as a misdemeanour by fine, or imprisonment, or both."

And he quoted Mr. Justice Willis in *ex parte* Fernandez as to commitment for time certain; and then Mr. Justice Mathew added—

> "A commitment until the offender consented to give evidence would not in my judgment be the proper order to make. On the other hand, where it appears that the Act done is due to a mistaken view of the rights of the offenders, the punishment where imprisonment is deemed necessary should be for a definite period, and should not be severe. We are not without guidance in dealing with cases of this description from the ordinary course of administering the criminal law according to the custom of England. It would not be right for a judge sitting in the criminal court, and compelled to sentence a prisoner, to direct that his imprisonment should continue until some condition, however reasonable the condition might be, had been complied with. Further, we had the assistance of the opinion of the Legislature against indefinite imprisonment for contempt of court expressed in Acts of Parliament and rules having Parliamentary sanction."

And then Mr. Justice Mathew went on to quote these Acts and Rules, all of which indicated that the custom of the English law was to have a definite sentence, and not an unlimited sentence. Then in the case of Hunt *v.* Clarke in 1889 Lord Justice Cotton, quoting the Master of the Rolls in the case *re* Clements said—

> "That I adopt, and apply as a principle which ought to regulate these applications. In my opinion no application to commit for contempt of court ought to be made unless the offence is of so serious a nature as to render the excuse of this summary jurisdiction necessary to prevent interference with the course of justice, and though here there is technically a contempt, I cannot see any such fear of serious interference with the course of

> justice or prejudice to the defendant as to justify the court in interfering by this summary and arbitrary process. If a thing is done wilfully which really would prejudice the parties to the cause before it comes on, I should not hesitate to commit to prison anyone who so offended. But of course that jurisdiction is to be exercised by the court only in extreme cases, and it would be most unfortunate if the court readily took it upon itself to interfere in such a summary way in order to ensure the due conduct of business."

And so again, in the case of O'Shea *v.* O'Shea, Lord Justice Cotton and Lord Justice Lindley made similar observations on the same subject. In the case of Queen *v.* Payne in 1896, which was a newspaper case, Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice, said—

> "I wish to express the view which I entertain, that applications of this nature have in many cases gone too far. No doubt the power, which the court possesses in such cases is a statutory power and it ought to be exercised in cases where there is real contempt, but only where there are serious grounds for its exercise. Every libel on a person about to be tried is not necessarily a contempt of court, but the applicant must show that something has been published which either is clearly intended, or at least is calculated to prejudice a trial which is pending."

He had said so much with reference to the line of judicial decisions in England and he now would put out what had been the line of Parliamentary action in England. The first reference he had to make was to the case of Craddock, which occurred in 1875. That case was tried at the assizes, and there was no official report of it, but a question was put in the House by Sir William Lewis in regard to it. Craddock was charged with some offence, and was in the end acquitted of that offence; but in the course of the proceedings Craddock made an observation to a fellow prisoner which was unheard by either the judge or the jury. The judge inquired what that observation was, and was told by the turnkey that the observation was that—

> "He would give it to him, or do something to him when he came out."

The learned judge immediately sentenced him to twelve months' imprisonment. He was glad to say that, although there seemed to be no doubt in some cases that there was no power to remit such sentences, in this case the Crown released the man after a few days. His hon. friend had pointed out that as long ago as 1882 Mr. Gladstone who was then leading the House, acknowledged that this question was not merely an important question, but one which much interested public opinion. Questions of this kind did not occur every day in England, and they only excited public opinion for the moment. The fresh tide of new events swept away the events of the preceding day, and public opinion did not act. That was not so in Ireland, where such questions made a great impression on the public mind. Mr. Gladstone, in referring to Gray's case, said—

> "The law of contempt is a question of great general interest . . . I venture to intimate to the House that it is a subject which has been brought of late much into the popular view both on this side and the other side of the Channel; and that the Government have it in contemplation—they hope at a very early period to submit a measure dealing with, and altering the present law."

That measure was brought in in the following session by Lord Selborne, the then Lord Chancellor. It limited the penalty of imprisonment to two months, fixed the maximum fine at £500, and gave a right of appeal. The Bill which was supported by the other law Lords passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, but as was the case with many other Bills, it did not get on in the House of Commons, and was dropped. The case being more pressing in regard to Ireland, several Irish Bills were brought in. Before referring to these he wished to quote what had been said in the House by Mr. C. E. Lewis when the case of Craddock was brought up in Parliament. That Gentleman said—

> "The experience of the last twenty-five years was of that character that it undoubtedly required governmental and Parliamentary interference. The sort of contempt which has sometimes been committed is a contempt which the judges have brought upon their court themselves. We have heard of judges who have put it into force because there was not a sufficient number of javelin men to escort them through the town. There are other cases also in which the judges have forgotten both themselves and the courts in which they sat . . . What are judges, and who are judges? They are gentlemen clothed in ermine. Many of them have been appointed —and in Ireland it is said they are always appointed for political reasons. I will not express any opinion upon that. I am afraid that the record if inspected would be too serious to look upon. I am afraid we should find there is hardly a judge upon the Irish bench who has not ascended that bench through the greasy ladder of politics . . . Do judges make no mistakes? Have they

no tempers like other men? Have they no bias like other men? . . . I think it is high time that such a change be brought about as will emove one of the greatest scandals connected with the administration of Judges."

In 1892 a Bill was brought in on the subject of contempt of Court, the sponsors of which were Mr. Warmington, K.C., Sir Robert Finlay, the late Attorney-General, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, now a Lord Justice, the present Lord Coleridge, Mr. Gainsford Bruce, and Mr. Birrell, the present Minister for Education. By becoming sponsors for that Bill that galaxy of able and eminent men showed that they believed in the necessity for some change in the law. He had pointed out why the Irish Members had taken this question up. The real truth was that arbitrary laws and coercion Acts formed so large a part of common life in Ireland that the Judges there, irrespective altogether of what Mr. Lewis had said, did not regard as the Judges of this country did, with the same jealousy, trial by jury and other securities of the law. They were accustomed to proceedings in prosecutions far more arbitrary than would be tolerated in this country. In little more than nine years there had been 238 committals for contempt of Court in Ireland, no less than thirty of these having been made by one Judge, and his last case was only last month. It was really extraordinary that such a state of things should exist in a civilised country. Two persons were brought up for contempt of Court, one of whom was president of the United Irish League Branch in his neighbourhood and the other was a district councillor. The ground of contempt of Court was that they had interfered with a receiver of an estate under the management of the Court. The Court whose duty it was to sell encumbered estates had become nothing but a great agency to collect rents with no idea of the lands being sold. In fact, it had become so scandalous an abuse that even in the time of the late reactionary Parliament, a Resolution was passed calling for the abolition of that Court. To revert to the case, it was said that at a meeting the chairman of the United Irish League and the district councillor had said something with reference to a piece of land which had been rented to a tenant by the Court. Counsel for these men who were charged with interfering with the receiver of the estate under the charge of the Court read affidavits which had been put in by them, in which they explicitly denied that at the time of the meeting they had any knowledge whatever that that particular property was in possession of a receiver of the Court. No implication of knowledge was made by the other side, and no evidence was called to disprove the statement. Counsel for the persons charged offered to bring evidence that they had no knowledge that they were infringing on the property of the Court, and he argued that if the men were to be tried at all it should be for unlawful assemblage and not for contempt of Court. The Judge, however, pooh-poohed all these objections, and determined that these persons should be committed for contempt of Court during his good pleasure, and they still remained in gaol. He contended that it should be made clear that this summary power should not be used where the ordinary process of law was applicable, and where no public interest demanded immediate action. He maintained that the offence to be adjudged contempt of Court should be wilful, that the sentence should be definite, and that in all criminal cases there should be a definite maximum sentence; and a power of release at the pleasure of the Judge. Further, he contended that there should be a right of appeal, and that the prerogative of the Crown should exist in these as in all other cases. All the House was asked to do on the present occasion was to say that this prerogative was arbitrary and indefinite and called for the consideration of Parliament with a view of its definition and limitation. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation."—(*Mr. Delany.*)

*DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton) congratulated the hon. Member upon having brought this matter before the House. Contempt of Court was one of those old contemptible weapons which belonged properly to the period of the Star Chamber. It had not of late years been very frequently employed in this country, because we had the safeguard of public opinion, but in countries where that public opinion did not exist it was invariably abused, and in no country more than in Ireland. He had seen something of the administration of justice in Ireland. He was with one of the best journalists, Mr. Massingham, during the trials at Maryborough, when Father MacFadden was concerned. They saw something of that jury-packing alluded to by the hon. mover, and he could well understand that the power of committal was a grand weapon in the hands of an Irish Judge in a case like that. He had himself had entrusted to his care a case of contempt of Court from one of our West Indian Colonies. The Judge there seemed to think that his power to commit for contempt of Court was the only really useful power he had to exercise. Public opinion was considerably excited over a certain question, and there were strong newspaper comments on the manner and mode in which this Judge exercised his discretion in the administration of justice. Very soon the Judge found it necessary to resort to this power. A paper was found in the public library which contained very severe strictures upon the Judge. It appeared that a barrister of this Judge's Court had handed that paper to the librarian because the librarian's copy had not arrived. This particular barrister was a man who had interested himself on behalf of those who were working in the plantations. He was indeed called "The Uncrowned King," and the Judge had his eye upon him. When he found out about the newspaper the Judge thought that the barrister was delivered into his hands at last. He got another counsel to move a rule for contempt of Court, and the barrister was ultimately sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment. Having suffered that imprisonment, he came over to this country and put the case into his (the hon. Member's) hands. He enlisted the sympathies of that distinguished advocate Dr. Blake Odgers, and they were fortunate enough to get an appeal before the Privy Council. There they had the benefit of a judgment from that distinguished deceased Judge, Lord Morris, one of the very ablest members of the Privy Council. He wished hon. Members who desired to understand something of this power of committal for contempt to read Lord Morris' judgment. The result of the proceedings was that the decision was reversed, and the Judge had the almost unique satisfaction of having to pay the costs. As Lord Morris pointed out there were other remedies open to a Judge whose dignity had been assailed, and he could bring an action for libel. But what was the origin of contempt of Court? It came from the Crown. The origin was that respect should be paid to the Crown, and to the representatives of the Crown on the seat of justice, and he could not understand how it could be said that there was no power to appeal to the Crown when the very power of committal itself came from the Crown. He challenged the statement that there was no power of appeal. The hon. and learned Member for South Longford had pointed out that there had been many attempts made to get an appeal measure passed through this House, and he sincerely trusted that the result of this discussion would be a determination on the part of the House that a Bill should be brought in which would practically abolish the power of committal for contempt of Court, or, at all events, secure that the power was defined and regulated and not left an arbitrary one, at the caprice of the Judge. He was sure that the present democratic House would take care such a Bill, at any rate, passed through that Assembly, whatever happened to it in the another place.

MR. MOONEY (Newry) said he wished to call the attention of the House more particularly to the operation of the law of contempt of Court in Ireland. Those who represented Irish constituences were over and over again told that they had the same laws in Ireland as in England. That was quite true in the majority of cases, but the administration of the law in Ireland was separate and distinct from the manner in which it was carried out in England. The law in England was administered in accordance with and controlled by the opinions —the popular expressed opinions—of the English people, but in Ireland it was invariably administered in the direction of the violation of popular opinion and against the spirit of the people of the country. The Land Judge's Court, for instance, was originally established to sell encumbered estates, but like a good many other things in Ireland the original object for the constitution of the Court seemed to have been lost sight of, and the Court had now become in effect the biggest landlord in Ireland. Supposing a man trespassed upon an estate or committed other offences against his landlord he was brought before a Court in Ireland consisting of that landlord and was sent to gaol. What would be said about such a system in England ? A magistrate who sat upon his own case would not be allowed to remain on the Commission of the Peace for one day, and every newspaper in England would accuse him of maladministration of justice. He agreed that there should be a short, sharp, and summary way of dealing with contempt so long as the law existed. But let the House look at the return of persons who had been committed for contempt of Court during recent years. Let them deal only with the Land Judge's Court. They would find some very curious and instructive figures. He had left out of calculation cases where a man had refused to obey an order of the Court or to deliver up documents, because they were cases in which he thought the jurisdiction of the Court ought to be exercised. He confined himself to the general vague charge of contempt of Court, such as the cases which had been alluded to. Hon. Members, if they examined the figures, would find some very curious and hazy ideas of what was a short, sharp, and summary method. He found that one man was kept in prison for one year and fifty-nine days, another for 256 days, another for 298 days, another for 291 days, and then they came down to terms of 191, 163, 142, and 134 days. All these were cases in which there was no definite charge against the prisoner, but he was simply kept in gaol through the whim of the Judge. He held that such a power ought not to be placed in the hands of any man unless there was a power of appeal. The Judge of the Land Court occasionally sat as a vacation Judge in the Court of Exchequer and in the Chancery Division, and instead of giving those guilty of contempt such long terms he followed the universal practice in those Courts and inflicted sentences of imprisonment for four days and nine days. A man ought not to have the right to have people brought before him for an alleged offence against himself and to send them to gaol for an unlimited period. Some power should be given to overrule the Judge in such a case. A short time ago the Viceroy of Ireland was of opinion that a certain individual who had been committed for contempt ought to be liberated, but the Judge who had an idea that his dignity had been affected absolutely refused to obey the directions which he received from the Viceroy. That did away with the idea that the Viceroy was the governing power and had the prerogative of mercy. Upon influence being brought to bear upon the Judge from another quarter he climbed down and the man was released. He hoped the Chief Secretary would agree to the terms of the Resolution.

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) entered a protest against what was nothing more or less than an attempt to intimidate and reprove one of His Majesty's Judges in Ireland.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) rose to order and asked the Speaker whether the hon. Member was in order in attributing to the mover of the Resolution an attempt to intimidate one of His Majesty's Judges.

*MR. SPEAKER answered it was contrary to Parliamentary practice to impute motives to any Member.

*MR. BARRIE said he bowed to the ruling of the Chair, but he would direct the House to the wording of the Motion and to the speeches with which it had been supported. It was difficult for the average Member to grasp the crucial fact that the law in Ireland was exactly the same as the law in England. He said deliberately that the terms of the Motion were calculated indirectly, if not directly, to convey some measure of censure on His Majesty's judiciary in Ireland. He had no desire to impute motives. As a Scotsman who had had the pleasure of spending a quarter of a century amongst the Irish people, he had also had the privilege of serving His Majesty on all kinds of juries, and had always found them willing to weigh calmly and deliberately the evidence put before them. But that was not the case in all parts of Ireland. In those districts which were dominated by the United Irish League it was no longer possible to expect juries to discharge the duties which their oath called upon them to discharge. [NATIONALIST cries of "Oh."] He claimed to have knowledge of what he said, and unfortunately it had been found to be the case by the Law Officers of the late Government. He ventured to prophesy that before the present Attorney-General for Ireland had occupied his honourable position very long he would find what his predecessors found, and would regret bitterly the limitations in the discharge of his office, which he found necessary to give to his prospective constituents when he was a candidate for Parliament in Liverpool.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY): May I be permitted to say that I gave no pledges to my constituents of any kind whatever as to the duties of my office.

*MR. BARRIE said he was bound, of course, to accept the right hon. Gentleman's statement. [NATIONALIST cries of "Oh" and "Withdraw."] When his Nationalist friends had given sufficient expression to their feelings he was prepared to continue his argument. Reference had been made that evening to certain remarks of Mr. Justice Gibson. He had no acquaintance with that learned Judge except in the discharge of his judicial office, and he was bound to say that, so far as he had had an opportunity of witnessing his judicial conduct or of reading of it, he was one of the most calm and dignified of His Majesty's Judges either in England or in Ireland. Reference had also been made to the apparently startling fact that another of His Majesty's Judges—he supposed Mr. Justice Ross was referred to—had during the last year committed some thirty persons for contempt, but the hon. Member who referred to that fact was judiciously silent as to the fact that Mr. Justice Ross by the law of the land was in charge of the land obligations of one-fourth of Ireland, and had therefore to deal with one-fourth of the agrarian litigation of that country. It was due to that fact that he had to commit so large a number of men to prison for contempt of Court. He had only intervened in this debate because he was satisfied that a deliberate effort was being made to prejudice the judiciary of Ireland in the eyes of the new Members of that House. He believed they had every right to be proud of His Majesty's Judges in Ireland, and the manner in which they discharged their duties. Reference had been made to the manner in which members of the Irish Bar were promoted to the Bench, but so long as the choice of Judges was exercised with the care and discretion which had marked all the appointments made in the past, he saw no objection whatever to that method of selection. Again he could only regret that so much of the time of the House had been occupied with this Motion.

*MR. DODD (Tyrone, N.) expressed the opinion that this House could not be occupied with anything more profitable than a Motion which would reconcile the Irish people to the principles of justice and make them a law abiding people. It was because he thought that this Motion moved in that direction that he desired to say a few words upon it. As had been pointed out by the hon. Member for South Longford, the jurisdiction of Ireland was a peculiar one. It was unique in the administration of justice and it was unique in procedure. There was no doubt that contempt of Court could be punished by imprisonment and by fine, and that that administration was entrusted to an individual. It was unique in the respect that while there was a summary jurisdiction in the hands of an individual, there was no appeal from his decision. This administration was still more unique if the opinion of successive Law Officers of Ireland was right. He was far from saying himself that they were right. But from 1855 downwards the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland had advised the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland that he had no power to remit a sentence for contempt of Court, but that the only person who had power to remit a sentence passed for such an offence was the Judge who passed it. As it was a civil matter the Lord-Lieutenant could not commute the sentence; as it was a criminal matter, the Courts of the land could not review it. It depended, therefore, for its authority on the fiat of one single mind. Why should they not try and bring Ireland into a condition of obedience to the law—to bring not the law down to the people but the people up to the law? He was going to make one observation now which he would not make if it were not that he was going to follow it by another. There was not a single man on the Irish Bench now, with the exception of the Lord Chancellor, who was in sympathy with the political opinions he held, and there was not a single man on the Irish Bench who had not been or sought to be a Member of this House with the exception of two gentlemen who were members of a political association. But he who had practised before them could testify that every single one of them, including the Judge who had been assailed in this House or, if not assailed, whose conduct had been impugned, were men who had an infinitely strong bent towards justice. He had perfect confidence in the fact that there was not one of the members of the Irish Bench who was not moved by a strong sense of justice. But was that enough? In the administration of the law, was it not still more important that there should be a feeling of confidence among the people that there was a strong bent towards justice in the Judges? If the people of Ireland could be brought to believe that the law of contempt of Court was administered for the good of the country, and with justice; if they could be reconciled to the administration, and have assurance that every case was carefully considered, the law would be respected. The remedy was simple; let this law of contempt never be resorted to unless there was no alternative. Let there be an appeal to the Court of Appeal in Ireland, and every man in the country would have absolute confidence that a case before that Court would be thoroughly considered and patiently heard by eminent Judges, whose decrees would command respect. In every Judge there was a discretion to proceed by way of indictment, and many Judges had exercised that discretion. The law of contempt should be limited, and put upon a clear intelligible basis. It should never be exercised when there was the alternative open. Did anybody remember the lamentable case where a man was sent to gaol for contempt and forgotten, and was kept there for a considerable time before it was discovered that he had not been liberated? He himself obtained an order to commit a man for contempt, and handed it to his solicitor, but told him not to enforce it. And for some time the attorney was walking about with the order in his pocket. Was that a fair thing? Ought not the law to be put on an intelligible basis? Was it fair to the Judge? Would not the Judges like to have their judgments reviewed and their authority vindicated? If once they had a right of appeal it would be one step towards making the people of Ireland the law-abiding people that the people in this country were, and a step towards that condition of things which had made England great and would keep her great for ever.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) said that to the general charge contained in the Resolution before the House he would have taken no exception if it had not been for some of the things said in the course of the debate and the tone given to the discussion by certain speakers below the gangway. It was suggested that there was some difference or distinction between the law in England and the law in Ireland relating to contempt of court, but he did not think that any suggestion of the sort could possibly be sustained. It seemed to be suggested also that in some way this power to commit for contempt was derived from Star Chamber times, and was inconsistent and wrong, having regard to the powers that existed for trial by jury. But there was authority to show that the right to commit for contempt of court was as old as the right to have trial by jury. It dated back before Magna Charta, and any interference with the process of the court, or with the officer of the court, was a contempt of court. He mentioned only certain kinds of contempt of court, because it was under that head that the recent cases which had excited so much interest among his countrymen came. The complaint against the gentleman who was committed from the court of Mr. Justice Ross, was in connection with the obstruction of the officer of the court who was appointed receiver and manager of a farm. It was hardly necessary for him to make any defence of so eminent, so upright, and so high-minded a Judge as Justice Ross. Many Members of the House would not understand the peculiar position held by Mr. Justice Ross. He was simply a Judge of the Chancery Division who also presided over the management of the sales department of all the Chancery courts and he had a specially trained staff. A great number of the estates that were in his court could not be sold because, although the Judge and the parties might be willing to sell, they could not have a sale without a purchaser. Necessarily when estates remained in court and could not be sold receivers and managers had to be appointed. It was an unfortunate condition of things, but it was not due to any action on the part of the Land Judge. Since the Land Act the sale of land had again become a possibility in Ireland. The rents collected through receivers from the properties in court had shrunk from £2,000,000 a year to under £600,000, and no doubt it was being reduced daily. In order to carry out the very responsible duties extending over vast tracts of country it was necessary that the rents should be collected by receivers in the service of the court. They were the servants of the court, and in every district of Ireland there were receivers appointed by the Land Judge. In no other sense had Mr. Justice Ross acted as landlord, as had been suggested. He did what the law obliged him to do. Was it to be suggested for one moment that if a receiver of the court was interfered with in the management of the estate by meetings being held on a farm to prevent its being sold by the receiver and the matter came before the Judge, he was not to do precisely what any other Judge would do if he found an officer of the court being interfered with and deal with it as contempt of court? It was not true to say that those gentlemen were not heard in their own defence; they were represented by eminent counsel. He would not discuss whether the Judge was right or wrong in coming to a particular conclusion. It would be presumptuous for any person not at the trial to form an opinion on a case he had not heard. It would be an extraordinary thing if a Chancery Judge should not have the power to protect an officer of the court when that officer was interfered with, and to punish the persons who interfered with him. With a good deal that had been said on the Motion he had considerable sympathy, and he should not have intervened had it not been for the implied suggestion that had been made against an eminent Judge. There were only thirty instances of contempt arising out of the collection of £2,000,000 of rents a year, and in every case the Judge made very lenient orders. He had only committed persons for any length of time when they refused to undertake not to repeat the offence. Even in the case of a fine of £25 it was not proved that that fine was ever paid or exacted, or any Order made at all. If a Judge, who was known to be an honourable and upright man fined a juror £25 for contempt of court, it was fair to assume that the conduct of the juryman must have been such as to deserve it.

*MR. CHERRY said that in rising to speak on this Resolution he desired to say in the first place that the Solicitor-General for England, who was present during the beginning of the debate, had unfortunately been obliged to leave, but he had had an opportunity of conferring with his hon. and learned friend, and had told him the line that he proposed to take in this discussion. His hon. and learned friend had asked him to state that he entirely concurred in the views which he was about to express to the House. The Resolution dealt not only with the law of contempt of court in Ireland, but also with the law in England. Every lawyer knew that the law as regards contempt of court was the same in both countries, and he thought that hon. Members would agree that it was desirable that it should remain the same. It was satisfactory, therefore, that although the Resolution was directed especially to the case of Ireland its terms applied both to England and Ireland. But, although the law was the same, the practice had been very different, and the circumstances of the two countries were quite different. So a state of the law which might produce no injustice in England might produce very grave injustice in Ireland. Not much had been said in the debate upon the administration of the law of contempt of court in the Court of King's Bench, and the courts of Criminal Jurisdiction in Ireland, but reference was made by the hon. Member for North Londonderry to a matter connected with the swearing-in of juries, and that one fact showed how different were the circumstances in England and in Ireland. For years and years there had been a marked difference in the systems of swearing in juries in criminal cases in the two countries; and here he desired to repeat what he had said by way of interruption, that what he had done as Attorney-General for Ireland in reference to the administration of the criminal law had been done because he thought it right, and in the interests of justice, and not by reason of any election pledges. He made no pledges or statements to his constituents with reference to the performance of his duties as Attorney-General. It was his desire, with reference to the administration of the criminal law, that trials in Ireland should, for the future, be conducted, as far as possible, in exactly the same way as they were in England. He only mentioned that by way of parenthesis. The matter of contempt of Court was not a pressing one at this moment in the common law courts or the criminal courts, nor was it in the ordinary jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery. They all knew that there were certain cases when the exercise of the power of committal for contempt was really necessary for the administration of justice in the Chancery Division, and nobody in the course of the debate to-night had called that right in question. But one of the Judges of the Chancery Division was in a very peculiar position—the Judge of what was formerly the Landed Estates Court, but was now the Land Judge's Court. There was nothing in England that corresponded to the state of affairs which, whether rightly or wrongly, existed as regarded that court. The speech of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh, to which they listened with great pleasure, and on which he must congratulate him, dealt, as they all noticed, with one particular Judge and one particular Court. The hon. Member was quite familiar with the procedure of the courts in Ireland, and he knew that it was in reference to this particular Judge and this particular court that the complaint existed, and that the question had arisen. That was the answer at once to the whole of his argument that, by reason of the fact that the law was the same in England and in Ireland, there was no necessity for this Motion or for any change in the law in regard to it. The Judge of the Land Judge's Court was originally appointed to deal with the sale of encumbered estates, but by reason, he thought, of the exaggerated value placed on the estates by the owners and the encumbrancers the sale of these estates was delayed for years and years, and the Judge was transformed by the circumstances into a kind of rent agent. When a poor tenant, who was ordered to give up possession, refused to do so, instead of being proceeded against in the common law courts, the order of the court was made for him to give up possession, and he was imprisoned for contempt if he did not do so. This state of affairs which did not exist, he believed, in England, showed that they must deal with the matter in Ireland in a different way, or, at all events, that precautions were necessary in Ireland which were not necessary in England. In regard to the recent case of committal before Mr. Justice Ross—he had not had an opportunity of reading an authorised report of the proceedings, but he accepted the facts he had been made acquainted with as being true — he thought he might say without offence to the learned Judge that the law as to contempt of court was pushed further by him in that case than in any that had occurred in his court before. It seemed to him that there was no parallel to that case. That being so, he thought they were all agreed that at all events the first portion of the Resolution was true. According to a very eminent English Judge, the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel, the jurisdiction of the Judges in dealing with contempt of court was both arbitrary and unlimited, and being applied to the particularly contentious subject of landlord and tenant relationship in Ireland, it certainly did require some amendment. On behalf of the Government, he should assent to the Resolution. They believed that the jurisdiction of Judges was arbitrary and unlimited, and that it called for definition and limitation. In the first place, some right of appeal was necessary and desirable from the arbitrary decision of one Judge dealing with a matter which often concerned himself personally. He could not see why any judge, discharging his duty fairly, should object to such a right of appeal. In 1883 Lord Selborne, as Lord Chancellor, introduced a Bill which provided for an appeal from every order for a committal for contempt; and the right of appeal had over and over again been mentioned by Irish Judges as desirable in these cases. Then the system of indefinite imprisonment, at least, as punishment for past acts, should be put an end to. As a matter of fact, it had been put an end to in the King's Bench Division in Ireland. The third point in which it was desirable that the law should be amended was in respect of the prerogative of the Crown to pardon in the case of contempt of court. Was there any reason why the Crown should not have the power to deal with a case of contempt and signify its wish to pardon the offence? It was desirable also that there should be some rules laid down as to the treatment of prisoners committed for contempt providing that they should not be herded with murderers and pickpockets. These matters that he had mentioned, as the House would perceive, were large and important and, as the House was aware, there was an immense programme of business before the Government this session; it was impossible, therefore, to promise immediate legislation on the subject. It was desirable, moreover, that the legislation should deal with England as well as with Ireland, and that the law of the two countries should be kept the same as well as the practice. If the hon. Gentleman desired to press his Motion the Government were prepared to accept it.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said he did not wish to express any opinion on the pronouncement of the Government as to any change of the law. He was not a lawyer, and did not pretend to appreciate the niceties and peculiarities of the existing law, but with some regret he had heard the right hon. Gentleman apparently criticise adversely the action of Mr. Justice Ross in some cases that had been before him.

*MR. CHERRY: I beg pardon; I did not in any way criticise adversely the action of Mr. Justice Ross. All I said was that he had gone further than any other Judge in regard to administering the law. I did not say whether he was right or wrong.

MR. WALTER LONG said he was glad to find the right hon. Gentleman did not wish to cast any reflection on that distinguished Judge. In many of the cases which came before the Irish Courts, and especially before the Land Judges' Court, there were peculiarities which were not to be found to any such extent in England. He did not think that anyone could with justice allege against any Judge on the Irish Bench, and certainly not against Mr. Justice Ross, anything but the most upright discharge of his duties, and no one could assert with truth that he was animated by any other than a single desire to do his duty and administer the law justly and fairly as between all parties. He thought that was a view which would be held by all—certainly it was the view held on those Benches. On the merits of the proposed amendments of the law he did not pretend to express an opinion, but if he thought that the acceptance of the Resolution before the House carried with it censure on the action of any judge on the Irish Bench, he should certainly vote against it, if he were alone in the Lobby. To carry a suggestion for reform of the law and to accompany it with any censure on the men who had done their duty in difficult circumstances would be a most improper course, and one to which he should offer the most strenuous opposition. He understood the Attorney-General for Ireland to say that he had consulted his English colleagues, and that both were of opinion that these changes in the law were desirable. It certainly did seem strange that the power of committal for contempt should be so much larger than any other power of the judge, but if the Resolution was to be understood as implying censure on any of the judges he should vote against it. He understood that view was repudiated by the Attorney-General, therefore they were inclined to regard the Resolution on its merits.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he should not have risen but for the almost insulting language applied to the Unionist Members by the Member for North Tyrone.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said the hon. Member for North Tyrone only secured his seat in the House by a majority of six.

*Mr. DODD: The hon. Member is wrong; it was nine.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said that all he wanted was to emphasise that the law in Ireland was absolutely the same on this point as the law in England and Scotland The hon. Member for North Derry had said he found the law in Ireland administered as justly as in Scotland. As another Scotchman who had the honour to represent a constituency in Ireland by the largest majority of any county constituency in the north of Ireland, he could say that his experience of justice in Ireland had been the same as that of his hon. friend the Member for North Derry, and it was because the whole of this debate had been tinged, either consciously or unconsciously, by a deliberate attack upon the judges in Ireland, that some of them had taken the stand they had to-night and had resisted the attack made intentionally or unintentionally—and he was afraid in many cases intentionally, judging by some of the speeches that had been delivered. It was a very sad thing that the Attorney-General for Ireland had chosen by deliberately ambiguous phrases to join in the attack made upon the judges in Ireland.

*Mr. CHERRY: I beg to repudiate that most emphatically. I made no attack on any judge in Ireland.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said the hon. and learned Gentleman at all events used language so ambiguous as to draw from the Leader of the Opposition a desire for some explanation.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said it was because they felt that all through this debate there had been a deliberate and conscious attempt to throw discredit upon the judges of Ireland—although not, he admitted, shared by all who took part in the debate—that some of them had felt it their duty to repudiate those charges.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question proposed, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, That the jurisdiction of judges in dealing with contempt of court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation.

EDUCATION (UNITED KINGDOM).

Address for "Return for the year 1904–5, relating to the Education in the United Kingdom, in the following form:—

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

		England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of public elementary schools receiving grants from the Imperial Exchequer				
2. Total number of pupils on rolls				
3. Total number of pupils in average attendance				
4. Number of principal teachers	Men			
	Women			
5. (a) Number of assistant certificated teachers	Men			
	Women			
(b) Number of assistant uncertificated teachers	Men			
	Women			
(c) Number of supplementary teachers	Men			
	Women			
(d) Number of pupil teachers	Men			
	Women			
6. Average number of pupils in average attendance per principal teacher	Men			
	Women			
7. Average salary of principal teacher	Men			
	Women			
8. Average salary for assistant certificated teachers	Men			
	Women			
9. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer				

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of schools receiving State grants ...			
2. Total number of registered pupils			
3. Number of pupils in proportion to population... ...			
4. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of schools and classes receiving State aid			
2. Total number of registered pupils			
3. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total number of universities			
2. Total number of professors			
3. Total number of matriculated students			
4. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer			

SUMMARY.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Total grants from Imperial Exchequer for Primary, Secondary, Technical, and University education ...			
2. Proportion of (1) to total population			
3. Total sum raised from local rates for educational purposes			
4. Proportion of (3) to total population			
5. Total sum received from the local taxation account ...			
6. Proportion of (5) to total population			
7. Total cost to the Imperial Exchequer of central administration for Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education			
8. Proportion of (7) to (1)			
9. Total sum expended by local authorities on local administration of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education			

—(*Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.*)

Adjourned at six minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 5th April, 1906.

NEW PEERS.

Sir Edward Arthur Colebrooke, Baronet, having been created Baron Colebrooke of Stebunheath, in the county of Middlesex, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Lord Glanusk sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Earl of Stanhope sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord de L'Isle and Dudley took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings. Petition for Bill ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill.

Read, and agreed to.

CRELLIN'S PATENTS.

Petition of John Caesar Crellin, of the city of Liverpool, engineer (by George Pollard, his duly authorised attorney), praying for leave to introduce a Bill for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to John Caesar Crellin for inventions for (1) an appliance for raising, lowering, supporting, and transporting portions of machinery and the like; (2) improvements relating to lifting jacks; and (3) improved apparatus for raising, lowering, supporting, and transporting portions of machinery and like uses; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

RITZ HOTEL, LIMITED.

Petition of the Ritz Hotel, Limited, under their common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill for enabling the Ritz Hotel, Limited, to re-arrange its capital, and to provide for the extinction of its deferred shares, and for issuing ordinary shares in lieu thereof, and for altering the memorandum and articles of association of the company, and for other purposes; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given this day). Read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Railway Clearing System (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 12th of March and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill; Millwall Dock Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 50.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts; and

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kesteven, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 51.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the councils of the administrative counties of the Parts of Kesteven, Surrey, and Warwick, and the municipal borough of Ealing, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

Were presented by the Lord President (*E. Crewe*), read 1^{a}; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners.

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills. Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, also the time for depositing Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. Read 1^a; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been read 2^a (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell), and reported from the Committee. (No. 53.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: MISCELLANEOUS

No. 32, Northern Nigeria: First Reports on the results of the Mineral Survey of Northern Nigeria, 1904–1905 (No. 1 of Series) by Professor Wyndham Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Director of the Imperial Institute.

No. 33. Southern Nigeria: Reports on Mineral Survey for 1903–4 and 1904–1905, by Professor Wyndham Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Director of the Imperial Institute.

No. 34. Report on the Agricultural Industries of Montserrat, by Francis Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc., Superintendent of Agriculture in the Leeward Islands.

No. 35. Report on the Sugar Industry in Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis, 1881 to 1905, by Francis Watts, C.M.G.. D.Sc., Superintendent of Culture in the Leeward Islands.

No. 36. West Indies, Report on the working of the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3545. Turkey (Adrianople).
No. 3546. Honduras.
No. 3547. Morocco.
No. 3548. France (New Caledonia).

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the chief inspector of the Western Division of Scotland, for the year 1905.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of February, 1906.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 29th March, 1906, declaring that Albert Brydges Farn, Assistant Inspector or Examiner of Vaccine Lymph, Privy Council Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27 and 28 Victoria, cap. 43, 45 and 46 Victoria, cap. 51, and 50 and 51 Victoria, cap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND.)

Rule, dated March 20th, 1906, made by the Lord Chancellor in substitution of Rule No. 18 of the Summary Jurisdiction Rules 1886.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Order made by the council of the borough of Burton-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST).

Statutory Rules and Orders 1906, No. 231. The Foreign and Colonial Post Amendment (No. 13) Warrant 1906, dated March 22nd, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools.

Of teachers in schools at Rawtenstall—Chatburn—Manchester.

Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Rawtenstall—Manchester (2).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon, was presented by the Lord Avebury; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 45.]

SOLICITORS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Solicitors Acts was presented by the Lord Alverstone; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 46.]

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.] (No.47.)

A Bill to amend the Matrimonial Causes Acts, 1857 and 1866, by extending the powers of the Court in relation to maintenance and alimony, and leave to intervene, and to amend the Evidence Further Amendment Act, 1869: And

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.] (No 48.)

A Bill to include bribery amongst extradition crimes, were presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed.

SIGHT-TESTING OPTICIANS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to regulate the practice of opticians as regards the testing of sight, was presented by the Lord Addington; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 49.]

CONVEYANCING BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DAVEY: My Lords, I am bringing forward this Bill at the instance of the Council of the Law Society. It is founded on the draft Bill which was introduced, I believe, in this House in the year 1898. That Bill had been very carefully considered both by the General Council of the Bar and by the Conveyancers' Institute, and was regarded by them as desirable, if not essential. This is not so important a Bill as it looks. It contains no new principle whatever. It is designed for the purpose of amending the Conveyancing Act of 1881. The author of the Act was Lord Cairns, and it was piloted through the House of Commons by the noble Viscount opposite, Lord Cross. As your Lordships are aware, it has proved a useful Act, as it has undoubtedly shortened many conveyances and other documents of a similar character, and has introduced greater elasticity into the means of dealing with properties of various kinds. But, as your Lordships may well think, in an experience of twenty-four years it has been found that some of the checks or provisions which were introduced for the purpose of protecting the public have proved unnecessary. It was right that they should have been introduced, but experience has shown that they can be dispensed with. Judicial decisions have been given which have led to some inconvenience in the working of the Act, and experience has shown that the powers which it was considered proper to confer in the first instance may now without detriment and with great convenience be enlarged. In fact, the machinery of the Act is by this Bill made more elastic. I should not be justified in going through the Bill and explaining the whole of its provisions; but, as I have already said, no new principle is involved in the Bill as a whole. It merely supplements or explains the Amendments or principles introduced by the Conveyancing Acts. I am quite conscious that it would be better to refer a Bill of this kind to a Select Committee of your Lordships' House, and if my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack, or any noble Lord, thinks that that course is the proper one to take, I should not offer any opposition to a Motion to that effect. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Davey.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I think that the Bill which my noble and learned friend is asking your

Lordships to read a second time promises to be a very useful legal measure, and I would suggest that it should be read a second time, and then referred to a Select Committee. This is eminently a technical subject, and I think that after the Bill has gone through the ordeal of a Select Committee, it may very usefully be placed on the Statute Book.

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DAVEY: My Lords, this is a similar Bill, not involving any new principle, but dealing with details and amending the law relating to this subject in some respect. The most important point in it is this. It occasionally happens that a married woman is a trustee, and your Lordships know that a married woman cannot dispose of land vested in her without certain formalities, the consent of her husband, separate examination, and so forth; and it has been held that that applies to land which is vested in her as trustee. Obviously if a person chooses a married woman as trustee, there is no reason why those formalities should be observed, and in some cases this has led to great inconvenience. Therefore it is proposed in this Bill that whenever a married woman is a trustee, executrix, or administratrix, she should be able to dispose of the property just as if she were an unmarried woman. There is another useful provision in the Bill which is explained in the Memorandum, and which carries out what has been the policy of the law for some years.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Davey.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I would suggest to my noble and learned friend that the same course should be pursued with regard to this Bill, which deals also with a rather technical matter, and that it should be referred to the Select Committee.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and referred to the Select Committee.

SETTLED LAND BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DAVEY: My Lords, the object of this Bill, which does not introduce any new principle, is to carry on the amendments of the law introduced by the Settled Lands Acts, 1882 to 1890, and to deal with defects which have been disclosed in the administration of the Acts. Experience has shown that there may advantageously and safely be given to tenants for life larger powers than were thought desirable at the time the original Act was passed. Again, some points in the language of the Acts have been found not to carry out what was the intention of the authors. I will not trouble your Lordships by going through the various provisions of the Bill; but I may say that an extraordinary position of affairs has resulted from the decision in *re* Lord Wimborne and Browne, 1904, 1 Ch. 537, that a surrender by a tenant for life of his life estate to the next tenant for life does not affect the powers of the surrenderor. He has parted with his entire interest in the land, and the next tenant for life has gone into possession, but the latter, though in fact tenant for life has no powers under the Acts till the death of the surrenderor. This is rectified by Clause 3. There are many other equally desirable provisions in this Bill, and I beg to move that it be read a second time. If your Lordships are good enough to give the Bill a Second Reading, I propose to refer it to the same Select Committee as the two other Bills have been referred to.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2^a.—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and referred to the Select Committee.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

*The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (The Earl of Crewe): My Lords, the first Amendment which I have to move is little more than a drafting one. The words "the sale of" were dropped out in the print, and I beg to move that they be here inserted.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 1, line 10, after the second word 'for' to insert the words 'the sale of.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*The Earl of CREWE: This clause deals with the extension of powers to other than chemists to sell poisonous substances for agricultural and horticultural purposes. It was felt that it would be well to give a guide to the local authority as to the character of the licences they should give under these circumstances, so that they should not be quite indiscriminately given. Some claim, I believe, was put forward on the part of the Pharmaceutical Society that in no place where a chemist had a shop leave should be given at all, but we do not see our way to agree to that restriction. It is quite possible that in a given town there might be only one chemist who was in the habit of selling only one kind of sheep-dip, or article or agricultural or horticultural use, and who might decline to supply intending purchasers with another kind of article. That would furnish a good case for a licence being given by the local authority. But we do not wish this power to be given indiscriminately, and we therefore propose that the local authority should take into account the reasonable facilities the neighbourhood offers.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 2, after the word 'therefrom,' to insert as a new sub-section; (2) Before granting any licence under this section the local authority shall take into consideration whether in the neighbourhood where the applicant for the licence carries on or intends to carry on business the reasonable requirements of the public with respect to the purchase of such poisonous substances as aforesaid are satisfied."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3:—

*The Earl of CREWE: It has been thought that "exhibited" is a more suitable technical word to use in this connection than "posted," and I therefore move its substitution.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 3, page 2, line 28, to leave out the word 'posted' and to insert the word 'exhibited.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4:

*The Earl of CREWE: The Amendment standing in my name to this clause is of a somewhat important character, and I can best explain it by stating to the House what the existing law is. As the law now stands, no person who is allowed to sell or keep open a shop for retailing, dispensing, or compiling poisons can assume the title chemist and dauggist, or chemist or druggist, or pharmacist or dispensing chemist, unless such person is a pharmaceutical chemist or a chemist within the meaning of the Act; and in a later part of the Act certain penalties are applied to those who use these titles or fail to conform to the regulations. Since the Act of 1868 was passed there have come into being a great number of large drug-selling companies, some of whom have actually used the title of chemists, and others who, although they do not call themselves chemists, use the word chemist on their labels. It is argued by the Pharmaceutical Society, and I think with some force, that this title is one which is earned by passing a particular examination, and if it may not be used by an individual who has not passed the examination, it ought not to be used as the title of a company, even though that company employs qualified men in its shops. Therefore we propose to leave out the words in line 32 "or use the description," which brings any drug-selling company under the penalties provided by Section 15 or Section 17 of the Pharmacy Act of 1868. I have another Amendment later on which saves to some considerable extent the rights of existing companies, and when we come to that I will explain what is there proposed. In the meantime I move to omit the words "or use the description."

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 32, to leave out the words 'or use the description.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The next Amendment is a small one. It provides what clearly was the intention of the clause, though not explicitly stated, that in every shop where these companies carry on business there should be a qualified man. That was the intention of the clause, but it was not quite clear; and, therefore, we propose to add the words "in every premises where the business is carried on."

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 2, line 33, after the word 'unless' to insert the words 'in every premises where the business is carried on.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I now come to the safeguard which it is proposed to extend to existing drug-selling companies, hitherto called chemists companies, who have gone to great expense in many cases, either on their shop fronts or on their bottles and other stock, in using the word chemists. We felt that it would be exceedingly hard if people who had done that, apparently under the sanction of the law, for a number of years, were suddenly put to what in some cases would be a very large cost indeed in altering all their paraphernalia in accordance with the new Act. Therefore, an Amendment has been drafted providing that, notwithstanding anything in this section, a company may continue to use any description which it was accustomed to use before April of this year. Since that Amendment was put on the Paper very strong representations have been made to me that this saving proviso ought not to be made absolutely permanent, that it would not be right to create a privileged class of companies merely owing to the accident of their having been instituted before the passing of this Act. It is held that it would not be right to create them into a privileged class for ever. I propose, therefore, at the Report stage, to bring up a further Amendment to the effect that they should be allowed to use any description which they were accustomed to use for a term of seven years. That would enable them to create something in the nature of a sinking fund by which they would be enabled in due course to make the changes required under the Act, either on their shop fronts or on their labels and bottles, or in any other way, without any real hardship being created.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 2, after the word 'company' to insert the words 'Provided that notwithstanding anything in this section a company may continue to use any description which it was accustomed to use before the first day of April one thousand nine hundred and six.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

*VISCOUNT ST. ALDWYN: My Lords, I should like to address a few observations to the House on the point which the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council has just raised. These companies at present do use the description of chemists under the sanction of the law, but they cannot sell except through persons who have passed the Pharmaceutical Society's examination and therefore have become qualified to sell just as if they were individual chemists or druggists. That being so, I confess I do not quite see the force of the argument that a company employing such persons, and only able to employ such persons, are not properly entitled, just as much as if they were an individual, to call themselves a company of chemists. The provision as it stands would, I think, be quite satisfactory to the existing companies, but not so the limitation which the noble Lord proposes to insert on the Report stage. I must say that I think it is somewhat unfair that those who have spent a very considerable amount of money, as the noble Earl has admitted, should be called upon after the lapse of seven years to drop the title of chemists by which they have been always known, and call themselves by some other title. I hope the noble Earl has not quite made up his mind that the additional proposal which he has intimated his intention to move on Report is necessary.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I need not say that I shall give the closest consideration to anything put forward by the noble Viscount. Between this and the Report stage I will give the most careful consideration to what he has said; but I am bound to inform your Lordships that I have been convinced, after giving really very close thought and consideration to the subject, that it is a reasonable claim on the part of the Pharmaceutical Society that the term chemist, when used in conjunction with the name of an individual, should only be used by an individual who has passed the examination.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5:

*THE EARL OF CREWE: This is the clause which deals with the power of making by-laws for the purpose of examination and I may inform your Lordships that it is exceedingly necessary that something should be done by the Pharmaceutical Society to improve the standard of those who come up for examination. Since the Bill was read a second time I have had brought to my notice, the last reports of the qualifying examinations held by the Pharmaceutical Society. At the examination held in Edinburgh in 1905, 421 candidates were examined; 280, or over 66 per cent. failed, 52 per cent. failing in the practical tests alone. In the London examination in 1905–6, 866 candidates were examined; 548, or 63 per cent., failed, 43 per cent. failing in the practical tests alone. The official visitors at those examinations, gentlemen of the greatest possible experience in these matters, agree that it is only possible to secure an improvement in this matter by a satisfactory course of study in the laboratory. We are anxious to confer on the Pharmaceutical Society powers which they do not possess at present, the powers explained in sub-Sections (a) and (b).

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 5, page 3, line 7, after the word 'persons' to insert the words 'desirious of'; in line 9, after the word 'the' to insert the words 'council of the'; in line 10, after the word 'training' to insert the words 'in the subjects of the examination'; in line 16, after the word 'the' to insert the words 'council of the'; and in line 17, after the word 'registered' to insert, as a new paragraph: '(c) providing for periods of time and courses of study in connection with the qualifying examination and dividing such examination into two parts.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE, in the absence of the Earl of Donoughmore, moved an Amendment to delete this clause, which applied the Act to Ireland. He said that the arrangements in Ireland, as his noble friend Lord Donoughmore fully explained on the Second Reading, were quite different from those in England, and it was unnecessary that the Bill should be made to apply to that country.

Amendment moved.

"To leave out Clause 7, and to insert the following new clause 'This Act shall not apply to Ireland.'"—(*Lord Oranmore and Browne.*)

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The inclusion of Ireland in this Bill was the work of the Irish Government under His Majesty's late Administration. It was inserted in the draft Bill prepared last year, I believe at the instance of Mr. Long and his Department. Your Lordships may remember that on the occasion of the Second Reading, in consequence of representations made by some noble Lords, I promised to look into the matter and see how the question stood with regard to Ireland. The contentions put forward by those who wished to see Ireland struck out of the Bill were, first, that there is in Ireland a class of registered druggists, a class which does not exist in England, and who are the kind of people, being allowed to sell poisons, who would take the place of those intended to be licensed under the second clause of the present Bill; and secondly, that when the matter was considered before a Departmental Committee in this country, no one was called upon to state the views of Ireland in this matter, and consequently they were, so far, in a different position from English chemists and others. I am bound to say that I attach great weight to those considerations, particularly the latter, because it seems to me hardly reasonable to include Ireland in the Bill without some definite inquiry as to what the needs of the country really are. At the same time, the Agricultural Department in Ireland still hold the view that it would be advantageous to farmers in that country to have further facilities than they have at present of obtaining these agricultural and horticultural poisons, and they do not consider that the extra facilities offered by the existence of the class of registered druggists to whom I have referred are quite the kind of conveniences the farmers in Ireland require. They maintain that there are several countries in which there are only three or four persons licensed to sell poisons, and that inconvenience to farmers may in consequence result. So far as this House is concerned, I am prepared to accept the Amendment moved by the noble Lord. But I think it is right to state that if opportunity does offer for finding out through some kind of inquiry what the real needs of Ireland are, my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland would desire to claim the possibility of re-inserting in the Bill the clause applying the Act to Ireland, provided, of course, that he is satisfied that the needs of the case demand it, and that no injustice would be done to any class of persons by so doing. At the present stage, as I have said, I am happy to accept the noble Lord's Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8 agreed to.

Schedule

*THE EARL OF CREWE: There are a number of Amendments standing in my name to the Schedule. Naturally, in a Bill of this kind they are of a very technical character, and I need not trouble your Lordships by going

through them. They relate to the the various kinds of poisons included in the different classes. We have had the benefit of the advice of some representatives of the Pharmaceutical Society in the wording, and though I believe they are not entirely satisfied with the Schedule in the form in which it stands, they consider it to be greatly improved, and our advisers are of opinion that it is as good as it can be made. I would remind your Lordships that there is a power to add, by Order in Council, to either part of the Schedule. I move that these Amendments be here inserted.

Amendments moved—

"In page 5, line 4, after the word 'alkaloids,' to insert the words 'not specifically named in this Schedule'; in line 6, to leave out the words 'and its' and to insert the words 'aconitine and their'; in line 7, after the word 'its' to insert the words 'salts and their'; in line 13, to leave out the words 'its preparations' and to insert the words 'preparations of ergots'; in line 19, to leave out the word 'preparations' and to insert the words 'salts and vermin killers containing strychnine'; in line 21, at end to insert the words "Antimonial wine'; in line 22, at end to insert the words 'other than those included under atropine'; in line 28 to leave out the word 'poison' and to insert the word 'poisonous'; in line 32, after the word 'chloroform' to insert the words 'and liniment of chloroform'; in line 33, after the word 'cocaine' to insert the words 'and its salts'; in line 36, after the word 'morphine" to insert the words 'and its salts,' and at end to insert the words 'of morphine'; in line 38 to leave out the words 'and poppies' and to insert the words 'poppies, all compositions prepared from'; and in page 6, line 6, at end to insert the words 'strychnine and and its salts, preparations of'."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to, and Bill reported, with Amendments, to the House, and to be printed as Amended. (No. 52.)

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read, and discharged.

IMPORTATION OF LIVE CATTLE.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY rose to call attention to the speech of the President of the Board of Agriculture to a deputation which waited on him to urge the retention of the present restrictions on the importation alive of cattle into this country; and to ask whether he could now say what was the decision of His Majesty's Government.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, the Question I have to ask the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture is one which is very much discussed in agricultural circles, and I must say that if by any chance the present sense of security were to be exchanged for a feeling of insecurity it would be a calamity to most of the farmers in this country. The other day the noble Earl received a deputation which consisted of a great many of those who are conspicuous in agriculture in this country. I doubt if a more important agricultural deputation has ever waited upon the Minister at the head of that Department. Under somewhat difficult circumstances the noble Earl, if I may say so, made an excellent speech in reply. He made it quite clear that he understood the position which had been put before him from what I may call our side, and there ran through his remarks a current of sympathy which led us to entertain some hope. At the same time, he felt unable to announce the decision of the Government on this point, and it may be possible that to-day he will not be in a position to state the ultimate decision of His Majesty's Government. I should be sorry if that were the case, but I cannot say that I should be surprised, as I noticed that a measure dealing in part with the question of the importation of foreign cattle is to come before the other House to-morrow. At any rate, I feel sure that it will not be due to the noble Earl if no answer is given to-night.

It cannot be denied that there is another point of view from which this question is looked at by those who differ from me, and I understand that His Majesty's Government must fairly consider, in a case of this kind, both sides of the question. But in case there should be any waverers I would like to put before your Lordships the reasons which govern me in asking this Question, and which govern those who are interested in maintaining the present regulations with regard to the importation of live stock into this country. Many of your Lordships will recollect the worries and losses which were sustained by the serious outbreaks of cattle diseases within the last thirty or forty years. In fact, I suppose there are some parts of the country which have never recovered from those losses. We are very anxious to prevent those losses occurring again. They led up to the two Acts of 1878 and 1896. By the first it was enacted that foreign cattle should not be allowed to move from certain wharves alive. There was a relaxation of that enactment, by which the Department was allowed to admit foreign cattle in cases where there was a reasonable security against the importation of diseased animals. Risks, however, were run; and in 1896 the present Act was passed, and that Act ensures the slaughter of live stock at the ports of debarkation.

I would ask, how has that Act worked? Under the Act of 1896 we have been practically free from diseases. The question must necessarily arise, how has it affected the public; and if your Lordships will permit me, I will quote some figures upon that point. In the five years from 1893 to 1897 the average number of live cattle imported was 480,000; from 1898 to 1902 the average number was 494,000, and from 1903 to 1905 the average was 544,000, so that in those thirteen years there has been an increase of live cattle imported for slaughter of 64,000. During the same periods the quantity of fresh meat imported was, from 1893 to 1897, 117,000 tons, from 1898 to 1902, 192,000 tons, and from 1903 to 1905, 225,000 tons, or an increase of 108,000 tons. Those figures show that notwithstanding the present Act there has been a considerable increase of meat imported into this country, and during the same period the price of British cattle has fallen 8d. per stone. The numbers of cattle in Great Britain have increased from 6,269,000 in 1884 to 6,987,000 in 1905. Therefore, your Lordships will see that notwithstanding these regulations there has been an increase of cattle to be slaughtered, an increase of dead meat brought in, and at the same time British cattle in this country have increased, so that it cannot be said that the regulations have either kept meat out or kept up the price of meat.

Everyone will rejoice at the increase in the number of cattle in this country, because cattle forms to a great extent the reserve capital of the farmer. It cannot be denied that if cattle are allowed to be landed in this country and moved about the country there will be a risk of infection. It would be almost impossible for the Board of Agriculture to obtain prompt information from other countries as to outbreaks of disease and as to what is going on there, or to find out how the laws against infectious diseases are carried out in other countries. The only safe way to prevent disease being introduced seems to me to be that no cattle landed at our ports should be allowed to go away from those ports alive.

This is a question of very great importance to all interested in Agriculture. If there were to be an outbreak of disease in this country, the risk to the small dairyman as well as to the rich dairyman, and the risk to the small occupier as well as to the rich landowner, would be considerable. This question affects Irish and Scottish farmers quite as much as English farmers. Further than that, if we in this country were unfortunate enough to have an outbreak of disease, the ports of other countries would be closed against our cattle, and what is a very remunerative trade just now—the trade in high-class stock—would at once be stopped. Therefore, we hope His Majesty's Government will not allow any change in the present law, and thus prevent disease from being brought into this country.

I note that the measure in another place is limited to Canadian cattle, but it is not likely, if there is a relaxation as regards Canadian cattle, that it will stop there. The relaxation would have to be universal, and consequently the number of points at which danger might arise would be so great that the Board of Agriculture would be quite unable to keep a reasonable supervision over them all. Prevention is far better than running risks. The noble Lord opposite knows as well as I do that disease is a thing which one cannot follow very closely. It would be quite possible for a cargo of diseased animals to be landed in this country, and for the germs of disease to be so incipient as to escape notice, yet once that cargo was distributed over the country there would be absolute certainty that disease would break out in various parts, and it would take considerable time before you could free the country from the taint.

In country districts the rules and regulations of the Board of Agriculture are carried out very strictly, and people have begun now to recognise that they are right and prudent, and, therefore, they assist in every way in carrying them out. They are, undoubtedly, sometimes hindrances to trade, but it is recognised that their object is a good one, and traders put up with those hindrances sooner than allow the risk of disease all over the country. I hope, therefore, that the noble Earl who has started so well in his career as Minister of Agriculture will maintain his good position, and do all that lies in his power to keep those regulations, which are simply regulations for the prevention of disease, in force, and not crush the hopes of farmers by letting it be understood that the Department over which he presides and the Government of which he is a Member are indifferent to one of the great industries of this country.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: My Lords, my noble friend who has just sat down has been most careful to avoid any allusion to the burning question which divides political opinion in this country, and though it is somewhat difficult, I shall do my best to follow his good example, for I am sure we all wish that His Majesty's Government should be able to review this very important subject without being hampered by the consideration that any conclusion they may come to is supposed to be in accordance with, or in opposition to, that system of fiscal reform which is advocated by Mr. Chamberlain.

My Lords, if the decision of this question could be left to the noble Earl the Minister for Agriculture, I believe we might rest content that he would act in what he believes to be the best interests of the country, but unfortunately all his colleagues have not been equally discreet in their utterances. They have sown the wind; it will be his pleasant duty to see whether by a tardy repentance he can prevent them from reaping the whirlwind, and if he is successful, I am sure that we shall be the last to insist on the penitent appearing before us in the conventional white sheet.

For, my Lords, we cannot hide from ourselves that this subject, like most other subjects, presents difficulties to the present Government. They have spent many years in the boisterous and careless exuberance of irresponsibility, and now that they have at last succeeded to the inheritance which they coveted for so long, they find themselves confronted at every corner with the ghosts of the past. In addition to this, they are severely handicapped by the polygamous, or perhaps it would be more correct to term it the bigamous, alliances they have entered into with the Labour and Irish Parties. The honeymoon is hardly over, and already one better half has turned and belaboured the Government over the head. In this case the old proverb was verified. "The grey mare is the better horse." How long will it be before the other member of this strange *ménage à trois* turns and rends them ?

If the Government can take their courage in both hands and act up to their proud boast of two months ago, that they would be master of their own House, I think I can assure them that they will have the unanimous support of the Unionist Party in both Houses of Parliament. But in the meantime, when we believe that the Government wishes to do what is right on this question, which is of paramount importance to all who are interested in land, whether landlords, tenants, or labourers, it behoves us that the arguments which we bring forward to urge that no change shall be made in the present regulations as to the importation of cattle shall not be tainted with the smallest suspicion of protection of home industries, but shall be such as will not bring a blush to the cheek of the straightest of the sect of the Cobdenites, if I may so describe the fiscal religion of the noble Earl And so, I think, my Lords, that my noble friend was very right to make much of our present immunity from disease, and of the danger of its introduction, should the present regulations be relaxed, and the disaster which would follow to the cattle trade if disease once more appeared amongst us.

I should like, with your Lordships' permission, to enumerate some of the objections which have been urged against any change in the present law, though I owe an apology to the noble Earl for doing so, for I am certain, as he has so thoroughly gone into the subject, that I cannot hope to present any arguments which will be new to him. First, do not let us forget that other countries claim the same right that we enjoy to protect themselves from disease. Canada, who is urging that we should admit her cattle free, herself imposes a quarantine of sixty days on our cattle when they reach her shores. Again, we are told that there is complete freedom from disease in Canada. Is this the first time that we have heard this ? No, my Lords, but whenever we have heard it, we have afterwards been sadly undeceived. I have no doubt that Canada is anxious to keep herself free from disease, but with the enormous length of frontier between her and the United States, it is almost impossible to prevent American cattle from crossing the frontier. I am assured that in cases it is the practice of American ranchers to do their best to evade the patrols, so that their stock may fatten on the more plentiful supply of grass on the Canadian side. Moreover, the supervision in the United States, where there are different regulations in each State, cannot be as complete as it is here, where a central authority has supreme command.

It cannot be pleaded that scarcity of beef is a reason for a change in the law, or that the consumer suffers in any way from the present regulations. Figures are always tiresome things to listen to, but I believe that more than twice the weight of fresh beef, alive and dead, is imported from Canada as compared with what was imported before the prohibition came into force. I am told that a similar state exists with regard to Argentina. I need not point out that if cattle were allowed to be imported from Canada, much pressure would be put on the Government to permit the same from Argentina. The question of disease has always been of great importance, but this is more than ever the case to-day, when our farmers have set themselves to work to adapt themselves to the changed condition of agriculture. Our breeds of cattle are renowned all the world over, and the high prices which are given by foreigners for the best of them for breeding purposes are greatly enhanced by the knowledge they have that these cattle are immune from disease.

I am sure His Majesty's Government realise what a serious danger and hindrance to any trade is constituted by a feeling of uncertainty, and we may earnestly call on the noble Earl to announce the decision of His Majesty's Government on this question at the earliest date, and I hope he will bear in mind that any possible gain to the consumer—which I believe to be imaginary—by a proposed change, would certainly result in his grievous loss if disease once more appeared amongst us.

My Lords, there is another aspect of the subject which I should like to submit for the consideration of the noble Earl, and that is how the repeal of the present regulations will affect Ireland. I believe there is hardly any public body in Ireland which has not protested against any change in the law. The noble Earl will correct me if I am wrong, but I believe that resolutions have been forwarded to him from grand juries, the only public body on which landlords or loyalists can now make their voice heard, and from county and district councils, which represent the Nationalist section of the population; and the Royal Dublin Society, which, I imagine, is well known to those of your Lordships who have an interest either in horses or stock, was specially represented in the large deputation which was received by the noble Earl last month.

Agriculture is almost the only industry in three provinces of Ireland. The small farmers, if farmers they may be called, who have one or two cows, sell the calves when they are from six months to a year old to the graziers, who in their turn fatten them for the English market. I must be careful not to press this argument too far lest it should savour of protection, but I cannot help thinking that any subject on which the Loyalists and Nationalists of Ireland speak with a united voice must merit a serious consideration of the present Government. I cannot but believe that the knowledge that any Bill to oppose the present restrictions would meet with the strenuous opposition of both Unionist and Nationalist Members of the House of Commons, and if it passed that ordeal would meet with an equally firm resistance from noble Lords connected with Ireland in this House, is a factor which will command the serious attention of the noble Earl.

It is not Ireland alone that will suffer; every taxpayer in this country will be affected. Two years ago an Act was passed by which this country undertook to advance £112,000,000 for the transfer of land in Ireland from the owner to the occupier. What will happen if the security on which that advance is being made is suddenly seriously diminished? If matters remain as they are, and if the money is gradually advanced, as is now being done, I am not one of those who ever believed that there was a serious risk of the tenants repudiating their contracts and starting a general strike against the payment of the instalments due. But I cannot say that I should be so sanguine if, owing to a change in the law, the value of all stock fell considerably. I am not so foolish as to suggest that for the sixty-eight years during which the instalments of those who have purchased are to continue no change should be made as to the regulations for the importation of foreign cattle, but I think it worth pointing out that what may be a serious danger in Ireland at present may not be of equal importance some years hence.

The new possessors of the soil in Ireland do not realise fully the advantages of their new position. They quite understand that purchase of their holdings means an immediate reduction in the amount they have been paying as rent, but the time when their heirs will become owners in fee simple seems so distant as to be almost a negligible quantity, while they are quite alive to the danger of increased taxation or a diminution of the value of cattle, on which they principally rely to pay the instalments due. Should Parliament in the future see fit to allow the importation of foreign cattle the position will be different. Every year that passes increases the interest which the tenant has in the land he has purchased. Every year lessens his liability to the State; and the fact that this liability is less and that instalments have been regularly paid, may possibly induce Parliament, should the value of what these purchasers have bought be, through no fault of their own, seriously diminished, to find some way to compensate them, possibly by diminishing the amount of the instalments and spreading the repayments over a longer period. But what might be quite possible ten years hence, when the Act has been working for a considerable period, would be quite impossible now. I know that the Irish view of possible legislation on this subject was brought before the Prime Minister last week, when he, with the Chief Secretary and the noble Earl, received a deputation consisting of Irishmen of all shades of politics from Cork. I think we may trust the noble Earl to declare at the earliest possible moment what are the intentions of His Majesty's Government in this matter.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, I trust I may be allowed to intervene in this debate, seeing that it fell to my lot in 1892 to have to order for the first time Canadian cattle to be slaughtered at the port of entry. Up to then Canada was the only country from which store cattle came to England. Owing to an outbreak of disease in 1892, it was the duty of the Government of that day to order those cattle to be slaughtered at the port, and when the Conservative Government came into office in 1895 they extended that Order by Act of Parliament, not only to Canada, but to every country on the globe. I shall not follow the noble Lord who has just sat down into the Party polemics which he introduced. Since I have had to deal with agriculture we have always endeavoured to place it above Party and to look upon it from a national point of view. But with regard to what he said about Ireland, I am well aware, as your Lordships also must be well aware, of the deep interest which the Irish people take in this particular question.

I will endeavour to address myself to the remarks which fell from Lord Jersey, with whom I may at once say I have the deepest sympathy in the object which he has at heart. There seems to be some confusion in the minds of those who are dealing with this question at the present moment. Some of them seem to think that the relaxation of the present Regulations is, as it were, an executive act which could be carried out by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture. It is perfectly true that that was so before Mr. Walter Long's Bill was brought in in 1896; but in order to deal with the question in any way at the present moment there has to be a repeal of the Act of 1896, a matter which your Lordships will at once see is not one purely for the Department but for Parliament itself to settle. There was another misconception which I thought I saw running through the speech even of my noble friend opposite, Lord Jersey, who is so well acquainted with agricultural matters. He spoke of disease. What did he mean by disease? He spoke as if, so long as the Act of 1896 was in force, this country would be free from all possibility of disease.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: I do not think my words could quite bear that interpretation. I meant the more serious diseases, such as foot and mouth disease and pleuro-pneumonia.

LORD BURCHCLERE: I was about to add, for the consolation of my noble friend, that in the debate in 1896 the late Lord Salisbury fell under exactly the same error as I imagined he had fallen under. In the debate in that year on the introduction of the Bill Lord Salisbury pointed out that he had complete confidence in Lord Spencer and my humble self when we were dealing with cattle diseases in this country. But he said—

> "Why I want this Bill to pass is that I am afraid at some future time there may arise some wicked Minister of Agriculture who may listen to the pressure of an overbearing majority in another place and be induced to take off the restrictions and admit disease into this country."

What I want to point out is, and the fact is very well known to my noble friend, Lord Jersey, that the Act of 1896 was directed against pleuro-pneumonia and pleuro-pneumonia alone.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: No.

LORD BURGHCLERE: Perhaps my noble friend will allow me to explain. There are two kinds of disease. Pleuro-pneumonia, though dangerous, is not the most dangerous disease. Rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease are far more dangerous. An animal suffering from pleuro-pneumonia must come into contact with a healthy animal to give it the germ of the disease, but foot-and-mouth disease and rinderpest are like scarlet-fever. If anybody comes into contact with an animal afflicted with rinderpest or foot-and mouth disease, he himself can carry the germs of that disease to healthy cattle. I knew a case where foot-and-mouth disease appeared on a farm on the coast of Sussex, in which case the germs had obviously been brought across by birds. Though by the Act of 1896 a wicked Minister of Agriculture is prevented from introducing pleuro-pneumonia, because slaughter at the ports is ordered by that Act in every case, the fact of cattle coming to this country, supposing they were infected with foot-and-mouth-disease, might cause an outbreak. The idea that this Act is an absolute safeguard against disease being introduced into this country is an absolutely false one.

Allusion has been made to a measure which I am told is imminent in another place. That measure, as the noble Earl himself pointed out, is in favour of Canada only. It does not repeal the Act of 1896. I, for my part, think, if you are to deal with the question at all, you ought to repeal boldly the Act of 1896. Why should you repeal it in favour of Canada only ? It is obviously giving a preference to Canada. I have referred to the debate which took place on the Bill in 1896. I myself took a leading part in that debate ; in fact, I moved the rejection of the Bill, and I think I was perfectly justified in the attitude which I took up at that time. My noble friend Lord Jersey tried to make out that the Act of 1896 was the cause of the freedom of this country from disease. All I can say is that I administered the Agricultural Department under the previous Act, and that when I left the Department in 1895, having acted under the old laws which were abolished in the following year, the country was practically free from disease from one end to the other. That I venture to think showed that it was quite possible under the original Contagious Diseases Act so to administer the agricultural affairs of the country as to secure that the country should be free from disease.

Ten years have elapsed since the Act of 1896 was passed. Trade has been built up on that Act, and I submit that if you were now suddenly to revoke the Act without notice to the farmers you might bring about a great interference with trade and do considerable harm Therefore, I venture to think that the repeal of the Act of 1896 is a matter which certainly requires the deepest consideration of His Majesty's Government, even if for one moment they contemplate doing any such thing. The matter requires consideration on behalf of the breeders and also on behalf of the feeders as well.

It has been said that this Act of 1896, or any restriction on the importation of foreign cattle, constituted an offence against free trade. I venture to think it could be shown that this is not the case. If there was no disease in any place of origin, and there was a constant stream of cattle coming into this country from all parts of the world, then, of course, it is very possible that the feeders in this country would be able to obtain their cattle at much cheaper prices than they otherwise could. But, on the other hand, you must remember that under the original Contagious Diseases Act, when the power to order slaughter at the ports was at the disposal of the Government of the day, you could not possibly have a constant supply to the feeders ; you must have an intermittent supply, closed possibly at a moment's notice, which shows that it is impossible for the feeders to rely on a constant supply of store cattle. This intermittent action which must be taken, lifts the whole question, to my mind, out of the area of Fiscal Policy, because the supply is not constant.

Your Lordships will see, from what I have said, that I am inclined to think that, on the whole, we had better face the situation and retain the Act of 1896 as it is. I know that there are many arguments to be put forward on the other side ; but I venture to think that, after these ten years have passed under present conditions and after breeders have formed their plans, probably, for the future and managed their business under this established state of things, it would be a somewhat inconsiderate act at a moment's notice to repeal this measure. I therefore venture to hope that His Majesty's Government will take these facts into consideration when they come to consider the question which is now before them. I have ventured to intrude for the reasons I have pointed out. I feel that this is a question which is above Party. I venture to think that my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture is as anxious to exclude disease from this country as any one of his predecessors, and I am certain that any action that he may advise or that the Government may take, will be governed by a desire to do all they can for the great national interest of agriculture.

The Marquess of WINCHESTER: My Lords, I address your Lordships chiefly as president this year of the Dairy Farmers' Association. The noble Earl who presides over the destinies of the Board of Agriculture has, I know, received deputations from that body; but I may say, as president, that I have received innumerable letters from owners of large dairy herds and breeding stocks throughout the country urging me to lose no opportunity of expressing their views and the fears they hold that any relaxation of this importation of cattle ordinance would meet with dire results.

The noble Lord who has just sat down dealt with the question of cattle disease. I will give your Lordships very shortly the figures, which embrace, I believe, cases of pleuro-pneumonia and foot-and-mouth disease. Between the years 1877 and 1886 there were in this country 29,206 outbreaks, between 1892 and 1894 there were 100 outbreaks, and between 1900 and 1902 there were thirty-four outbreaks, so that although it is possible that foot and mouth disease may be brought to this country by the foot of a crow, as the noble Lord has told us, the probability of that is very remote, as I think these figures show. I was very glad to hear the noble Lord speak in such a sympathetic way of the interests of the breeders. The Royal Counties Agricultural Society, in connection with their yearly shows, have instituted prizes for dairy herds within a certain radius from the centre where the show is held, and the report of the judges which we received last year, and which embraced a radius of forty miles round the town of Bournemouth, gave evidence of the enormous value of the dairy herds in that district. I think that to endanger such herds as these, which no other country but ours can produce, and to which breeders from other countries continually come for the purpose of strengthening the breed in their countries, would be an act of which I do not think any Government could possibly be guilty.

I cannot help referring to the qualifications of the Members of the other House who are promoting this Bill. Two of them are described as Canadians; one is a merchant and shipbroker; one is a gentleman who combines the occupations of a director, a barrister, and a doctor; one is a manufacturer of feeding cakes; another is Mr. W. Crooks, whose trade, I believe, is that of a cooper, and the other Member calls himself a country gentleman and hails from the county of Sussex. I do not think that His Majesty's Government can feel that there is amongst those gentlemen a very strong combination representing agriculture. I feel sure, after the speech which we have heard from the noble Lord who has just sat down, that we may expect, if not an absolutely satisfactory statement as to the intentions of the Government, at any rate a reassuring statement from the noble Earl who presides over the Board of Agriculture.

Lord LOVAT: My Lords, I rise to call your Lordships' attention to another aspect of this question, namely, the number of those who will be affected for good or for ill on both sides, the breeders and feeders. Noble Lords from England and Ireland have spoken, and I would like to offer a few statistics on this subject from Scotland. It will probably be agreed that the division lies between those who breed cattle and those who feed cattle. It is a division between the rich land and the poor land. In Scotland the main opposition to the restriction preventing the importion of live cattle from Canada comes from the district between Forfar and Midlothian, and the total number of farmers there who have over fifty acres of land, and presumably that would include all those who would feed cattle in those four counties, is only 2,400, and 998 out of the 2,400 are not feeders of cattle at all. A man with fifty acres of land would not be able to keep more cows than would just do for himself and his family, and the number of cattle he would feed would be very small. Therefore, you see that in the four counties from which the main opposition comes 1,500 would be a liberal estimate of the number of farmers who are anxious to get Canadian cattle in.

May I offer, on the other hand, a glance at the Highlands, where, as you are aware, there are a very large number of small holders who would be most adversely affected if this Act were repealed. Practically the whole of the Highlands, which breed cattle and cannot grow winter feeding, are against the taking off of this embargo on the landing of Canadian cattle. The reason why they are against it is that the amount of land which grows green crops is very small, and therefore, being unable to feed the cattle in winter, it would be impossible, if Canadian store cattle were landed at any price, for them to make anything out of it. These crofters in the north of Scotland are a struggling race, to whom this is a matter of importance. They pay from £5 to £10 rent, they grow a small amount of oats and a small amount of potatoes just sufficient for their own use, and the only ready money they get hold of out of agriculture comes from the animals they sell. If the value of those animals is lowered by £2 a head it will be a serious matter—it will amount to one-third of the direct monetary income which they get out of the land.

It is difficult to generalise, but I have seen the returns, from the parishes immediately around Inverness, of those who have been endeavouring to find out the local opinion, and out of whole parishes of perhaps 200 or 300 holders of land not more than two or three are in favour of taking off this embargo at the ports. The same holds good, I understand, in the case of the Islands, and I have received a letter from the adviser to the Congested Districts Board, who says it will be a most serious matter for the whole of the Highlands and Islands if Canadian cattle are allowed in free. My noble friend, Lord Jersey, called attention to the great uncertainty that would be caused among the smaller holders of land; £50 to £600 farmers would have the greatest difficulty in going into this new form of agriculture; and having got out of their present system they would have no security that at any moment disease might not break out, when they would have to revert to the old order of things. It would cause the greatest inconvenience and the greatest uncertainty.

I will quote a few statistics as to disease in this country, showing what we have to fear if we allow foot-and-mouth disease, pleuro-pneumonia, and rinderpest to find their way into this country again. In 1883 there were no less than 219,000 cattle infected by disease in Great Britain; from 1870 to 1896 there was only one year in which pleuro-pneumonia did not come to the ports. In 1900, 1,551 animals that were slaughtered at the ports had foot-and-mouth disease. Supposing only one per per cent, of these 1,551 cattle got into this country, how long would it be before foot-and-mouth disease was rampant in the land? It is said that Canada is at the present moment free from cattle disease, and has a comparatively clean bill of health. As a matter of fact, I do not think Canada is free from disease. I am told that according to the last report of the Veterinary-General for Canada, no fewer than 411,000 head of cattle were suffering from scab diseases. They had to be dipped, and no less than 176,000 of them had to be dipped a second time. I think anyone who has travelled abroad and seen what this cattle scab is, will know that there is nothing which spreads more quickly, or is more difficult to stamp out, and, therefore, to say that Canada has a free bill of health is not to state what is absolutely accurate.

There seems to be a general opinion that this question of keeping out Canadian cattle is one which is only urged by the breeders of pure stock. That is untrue. It is the breeders of common stock with whom the competition is going to be. We breeders of pure stock would like to see free trade in cattle as wide as it possibly can be. Through the wisdom of our ancestors, the close working of line breeding, the excellent results which had been obtained from showing, agricultural journals, and general education in agricultural matters, we have evolved a much purer breed of animals than exists in any other country in the world; and therefore, the breeders of pure stock in this country would like nothing better than free trade so long as free trade is not mixed with free disease. That is not the case with the farmer breeder—the man who cannot afford to keep pedigree stock. He is going to be unfairly competed with, because these animals will be brought into the country with the risk, as I have shown, that at any moment we may have an outbreak of disease which may spread rapidly in a very short time.

*Lord DESBOROUGH: My Lords, I trust the House will excuse my saying a few words on a subject of which I happen to have heard a great deal lately in my position as vice-chairman of the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture. No one can have attended the meetings without being struck with the fact that there is almost unanimity of opinion on this matter among agriculturalists in Great Britain and Ireland. Resolutions have been submitted to and voted upon by no less than fifty-seven chambers of agriculture throughout England, and they were unanimous that no alteration should be made in the regulations which have worked so well, and which have saved large flocks of herds from the terrible disease which devastated them in years past. The resolutions I have just referred to were to hand last month. Since then eight resolutions have been passed by chambers of commerce. Only three chambers have passed resolutions in favour of removing the restriction —the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture, the Ripon Chamber of Agriculture by the casting vote of the chairman, and the Rye Chamber of Agriculture who have since repented and passed a resolution in favour of retaining the restriction.

I believe it is no exaggeration to say that 99 per cent. of the farmers in this country are absolutely opposed to any relaxation of the restrictions which have worked so well. We do not require protection except against disease. We do not fear the importation of cattle fit for the market or of meat. Since these regulations have been passed the weight of meat alive and dead introduced into this country has more than doubled, coming both from Canada and Argentina, and I think that fact alone is sufficient to show that there is no fear of the people of this country being deprived of the food which they want, and must have. But what the smaller and poorer farmers fear most is a recurrence of that dreadful scourge which ruined so many of their predecessors in the sixties. The rich breeders will not be those who will suffer; it is the poorest—the dairy farmers—who have most to fear from the importation of disease from abroad.

Canada may be free at present from the disease of which we have been speaking, but I am afraid she is not free from anthrax or mange, which, if introduced into this country, could not but have damaging results to our flocks and herds. It is impossible, with a long line of frontier between Canada and the United States, to prevent flocks and herds crossing and recrossing; and it is a well-known fact that no one in the United States is in a very great hurry to notify when his flock is infected. In fact, in 1902, foot-and-mouth disease broke out in Massachusetts in August, and it was not notified to the authorities until November; and therefore I contend that it would be quite impossible to guard against the danger of the importation of disease if the proposal in question were carried out. In the name of the 99 per cent. of the farmers who are opposed to any relaxation of the restrictions I venture to appeal to the noble Earl opposite, who has already shown so much sympathy to the deputation from the chambers of agriculture, to press upon His Majesty's Government the necessity of giving their advice and experience to guide the House of Commons in this most important matter.

Lord BARNARD: My Lords, as one who has many opportunities of coming into contact with agriculturalists in various parts of England, I venture to say two or three words on this matter. In the first place, I should like to express emphatically my opinion that not only has this question nothing whatever to do with free trade, but it cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be included in that subject. We must bear in mind that it does not involve any question of protection for revenue, neither does it involve any question of protection of home industries exclusively against the foreigner.

Since I have entered this House I have had placed in my hand a letter which reveals that there is a possibility of another aspect of the question altogether. The letter is written by a gentleman engaged in farming on a large scale in Argentina, who is at present in this country for the purpose of buying stock. He says that if the ports of this country are opened he feels certain that the Argentine authorities will at once close their ports against all live stock from this country, as they have been struggling hard for a long while to keep disease out, and they would naturally feel the extreme danger of importing cattle from a country where such restrictions did not exist.

I have communicated with two gentlemen of great and wide experience. I asked them for their opinions, and they have expressed them in almost identical terms from totally different parts of the country, to the effect that it is, in their opinion, practically impossible to insure perfect protection against disease. Several farmers from whom I have obtained opinions say they would not altogether object to the opening of the ports if they could be sure that they would be protected; but the question I ask the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture is this—assuming that the Government relax the present restrictions, can he give us any assurance that we can be absolutely protected against disease?

I must admit that there is a great deal to be said on both sides. It is a question for breeders and a question for feeders; but some practical farmers have laid this view before me very strongly: that although many farmers can be both breeders and feeders, a large number can be breeders only. Assume for one moment that we had no restrictions—that the restrictions were removed to-day. No doubt feeders would derive some benefit; but when disease supervened, if it should supervene, what would be the result? The result would be disastrous to all parties. Several tenant farmers, whose opinions I have in my hand, although they are feeders, say that if they consulted only their own interests for the moment they would not object to the importation of foreign cattle. At the present moment, however, they feel great confidence in the fact that they are able to go into the markets and buy cattle which they are certain are free from disease. That certainty would not exist if these regulations were withdrawn. May I beg the President of the Board of Agriculture on this occasion to give some very definite statement of his view and the views of His Majesty's Government? I can assure him that there is at the present moment a very considerable amount of uncertainty and unrest. We all know that uncertainty and unrest are bad for trade of every kind, and therefore the sooner this question is set at rest and decided the better it will be for the agriculture of the country.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I desire to express my gratitude to noble Lords for the manner in which this very important question has been debated. No one is more aware than myself how important this question is, especially to Members of your Lordships' House, and I think the House and the country will recognise the very temperate tone which has been adopted all through this debate, though noble Lords opposite naturally feel very keenly on the subject. I should like to be allowed to return my thanks to my noble friend Lord Jersey for the very kind and courteous language he used concerning myself in connection with the deputation which waited upon me on this subject. As the noble Earl said, it was perhaps one of the most important deputations that has ever been received by a Minister of Agriculture. This important question seems to have two aspects: the domestic and the Imperial. As the speeches of noble Lords have been to some extent on one side, perhaps I may be allowed to put the other side very shortly before the House. There is a very large portion of the public, as noble Lords are aware, who would be glad to see the embargo removed, although there is great diversity of opinion. Ireland, I suppose, may be taken as solid against any alteration of the law. As regards Scotland, I suppose it would be half-and-half.

LORD LOVAT: No.

*EARL CARRINGTON: I may be wrong, but I am informed that the majority in Scotland are in favour of the admission of Canadian cattle.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: No, no.

*EARL CARRINGTON: England is divided to a certain extent in opinion. As regards Canada itself, no doubt there is there a strong feeling, I will not say of resentment, but of anxiety, and a very strong wish that the law should be altered in respect to Canada, and last year the Dominion Senate passed a Resolution on the subject. That Resolution was sent to this country and acknowledged by Mr. Lyttelton when Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Debate in the Dominion Senate was also sent over. The Hon. Mr. Fisher, the Minister for Agriculture in the Dominion Parliament, went so far as to say that he looked upon it as an unfriendly act. But I have it on the very best authority that whatever decision this country may come to on this subject Canada will receive it in the most friendly spirit.

With regard to the question of disease, there, I think, Canada has a very strong case. For ten years, from 1895 to 1905, I cannot find that a single case of contagious pleuro-pneumonia has been identified among Canadian cattle landed on these shores. I believe that is an absolutely accurate statement, and that there is no question about it. As regards the feeling in Canada, I read the other day with a great deal of interest a speech made by the Viceroy, Lord Grey, when he was on his travels through Canada. In the course of his speech Lord Grey said:—

> "There are 7,000,000 cattle in Great Britain, and naturally there is the greatest hesitation on the part of the owners of that very valuable stock to admit cattle from abroad. If the British Parliament in its wisdom regard their interests as superior to those of the graziers, to which you and I belong, then you and I will accept with resignation those restrictions in exactly the same way as the British manufacturer accepts the tariff with which you prevent his manufactures entering into Canada."

There I beg at once to join issue with my noble friend. I cannot for one moment admit that the restrictions are imposed either for the sake of protection, or with the object of keeping up the price of store cattle.

And with all respect I must say that I thought the noble Lord who spoke on behalf of Ireland, and the noble and gallant Lord who spoke on behalf of Scotland, were rather treading on dangerous ground and getting uncommonly near protection when they said that one great objection to this embargo being taken off, was that it would hit the small owners of cattle, and depreciate the value of their stock. If the slightest idea existed that this embargo is in any way connected with the question of protection, I am certain that every noble Lord on this side of the House would hold up both hands against it. But I think we have a stronger case than that. I might go on to say that, as far as I can make out, Liberals do not object to the embargo if, and only if, it is a preventive against cattle disease. Lord Herschell, Lord Kimberley, Lord Rosebery and Lord Spencer argued in 1896 that the power to prevent cattle coming into this country should not be a power fixed by law, but should be left to the discretion of the Board over which I have the honour to preside. That is a very different thing from flooding the country with cattle that may come in, in a promiscuous and haphazard way which would, of course, be a great danger to the flocks and herds in this country.

I admit that we cannot fail to be struck with the value and the number of the flocks and herds existing in this country. One of the great arguments in favour of abolishing the restrictions has reference to the proof whether or not the number of cattle imported has decreased in consequence of the law, or whether the price of meat has increased in consequence of store cattle not being allowed to come in free. In 1879 the number of cattle imported from the United States was 76,000; in 1905 the number had risen to 415,000. Canadian cattle were required to be slaughtered in 1892. In 1891 108,000 Canadian cattle were imported; in 1905 the number was 148,000. This is a small increase, I admit, but still we can say that at any rate there was no falling off. Now, as to the price of meat. From 1880 to 1892 the price of first quality meat was 5s. 3d. per stone of 8 lb.; from 1893 to 1905 the price was 4s. 7d., so that the price of food has not increased in consequence of the regulations, but has diminished to the extent of 8d. per stone.

I now come to the real reason which prompted the noble Earl opposite to put this Question on the Paper. That which is in the minds, I believe, of ninety-nine out of every 100 agriculturists in this kingdom is the fear that the removal of the restrictions might be followed by a sudden bolt from the blue, in the shape of an alarming outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia or foot-and-mouth disease, entailing absolute ruin to many agriculturists. From 1892 to 1895 there were sixteen cases of pleuro-pneumonia in cattle landed from Canada. In 1892 there was a sudden outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the United States of America. One case was discovered in the Metropolitan markets, and within thirty-six hours another case occurred in Edinburgh, the infection being carried there, no doubt, in the clothes of some one engaged in the cattle yards.

Many of us, I am sorry to say, are old enough to remember the outbreak during the sixties. I have a vivid recollection of the terrible havoc that was done among herds at that time. There were many prudent and wise landlords in the country, Lord Jersey included, who out of their pockets paid the whole of their tenants' losses and thereby saved them from absolute ruin. The amount paid in compensation for cattle plague between 1865 and 1868 was £1,150,000; the amount paid in compensation for pleuro-pneumonia since 1890 has been £387,514; and the estimated direct loss to stock from foot-and-mouth disease is over £2,500,000, and that on an estimated value of cattle in the United Kingdom of over £107,000,000. I think I have said enough to show what great responsibility there would be in any sudden change in this legislation. Though I am unable to state what the ultimate decision of His Majesty's Government may be—there will be some interesting debates on this subject very shortly in another place—I think it my duty to state that as far as my own personal conviction is concerned, having examined the whole case with an open mind and had the opportunity of receiving deputations from both sides, I think it would be undertaking a grave responsibility if the restrictions at present in force were suddenly and without grave consideration withdrawn.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I should like to congratulate my noble friend who has just sat down on developing very considerable diplomatic talent. I have admired it very much lately in his reception of the deputation of the supporters, and also in another place the deputation of the opponents, of these restrictions, and I am sure that he said to them everything that was pleasant and agreeable. He went all round the subject but never finally got to it; and even in addressing your Lordships to-night it was only just in the last sentence of his speech that he came to what we wanted to know.

The question that was put to him more than once from this side was, "what is your opinion with regard to this very important matter? And, still more, what is the opinion of His Majesty's Government?" It has been generally admitted, and no one has admitted it more than the noble Earl himself, that this question is a very important one indeed. Surely on a question like this we have some right to have an indication of what is the opinion of His Majesty's Government. Has His Majesty's Government an opinion? Has the noble Earl himself an opinion? He has told us, I think, that so far as his own opinion goes he felt that he would be taking very serious responsibility indeed if he were to attempt to interfere with the present law. Now, if there is any subject on which the noble Earl is capable of giving advice to His Majesty's Government surely it is this subject, which is most especially one for the Board of Agriculture. It is one on which my noble friend's advice ought to have weight. Well, has it had weight? That is what we want to know.

We are told that we must have patience, and we shall hear more. Let me point out to my noble friend that the position which he occupies, according to his statement, is not a very dignified one. He says he is in favour of retaining the present regulations. But is that going to be done? I have rather high authority for believing that this matter is going to be left to the judgment of the two Houses of Parliament. Supposing for a moment that that is so, and supposing Parliament decides that these regulations are to be removed: in what position will my noble friend find himself? He will have advised his Government that they ought not to remove the restrictions. Parliament will have decided that the restrictions are to be removed. In what position will my noble friend then stand? He will be administering a law which he himself is strongly of opinion is opposed to good policy.

Let me pass from my noble friend and go to his colleagues. They apparently have not much confidence in my noble friend; at any rate, they have not manifested any confidence in him up to the present time. Have they confidence in themselves? I am afraid they have not much more confidence in themselves than they appear to have in my noble friend. Let us begin with the Prime Minister. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman advocates, and has for long advocated, the removal of these restrictions. I think he has generally done so on the principles of free trade; but let that pass. At all events, speaking to his constitutents not very long before the general election, he declared himself strongly in favour of removing these restrictions. How long that opinion may have lasted I do not know, but on March 28th, a deputation from the county of Cork waited upon him. I hold in my hand *The Times* report of what occurred. My noble friend opposite was present, and he will be able to correct me if the report is inaccurate. Mr. O'Brian argued that it would be disastrous for Ireland if the restrictions were removed, and the Prime Minister, in reply, said—

> "He was very much impressed with the views of the deputation. They had put forward a strong case, not only as regarded the county of Cork, but the bulk of Ireland. There were, however, some objections to the continuance of restrictions on the free movements of agricultural and other products, but he was not aware of the dangers to which the deputation alluded. He had made a speech on this subject some months ago to his constituents, and this had excited a good deal of comment. It was only natural that he should have neighbourly views with regard to their interests, because in that locality there was a great deal of grazing, and undoubtedly they desired to see as many sources of supply of store cattle as possible. The Cabinet had not decided anything definite with regard to the Bill for removing the embargo. He personally was inclined to leave the question to the judgment of the House."

Just see what the position of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is. He himself is in favour of removing the embargo, and he naturally told his constituents that fact; but when the inconvenient Irish deputation waited upon him you will observe that he changed his mind, and, instead of proposing to do away with the restrictions, he said he intended leaving the matter to the judgment of the Houses of Parliament.

It is quite clear that the Prime Minister differs very much from my noble friend opposite. We know that Ministers do not often say the same things. The Prime Minister's opinion, however excellent it may be, is not the opinion of my noble friend opposite. The Prime Minister and my noble friend were not alone. Mr. Bryce was present too. Mr. Bryce represents the City of Aberdeen which has a great harbour, and it is of very great interest to Aberdeen to land as many cattle as possible. Aberdeen does not breed cattle; it does not feed cattle. The harbour interest is the great interest in Aberdeen, and Mr Bryce, having naturally a "neighbourly feeling towards his constituents," told them that he was in favour of doing away with the restrictions. But when he came face to face with the Irish deputation, what did he say? He said—

> "There were diverse interests in connection with this question, but he would endeavour to bring every phase of the question on which feeling ran very strong in Ireland before the Cabinet."

He was endeavouring to pacify the Irish deputation. Here you have two Ministers who, when they were before their constituents, declared themselves strongly in favour of doing away with the regulations, but who, when they were waited upon by the Irish deputation, endeavoured to explain away their previous words in the best way they could.

My Lords, what is the difficulty that His Majesty's Government have in making up their minds on this question? It is the eighty Irish Members; the eighty Irish votes. They know perfectly well that for every man in Ireland who cares one cent. about Home Rule or Irish University education, there are at least ten who care, and care very deeply, about store cattle. Store cattle is what interests an Irishman. The price of store cattle is life and death to him, and the notion of any interference with these regulations is quite sufficient—as I am sure we shall see in two or three days—to bring every Irish Member of Parliament on the back of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

As we can get no answer from my noble friend opposite, I am afraid that we have to make a conjecture for ourselves, and it is that this matter is to be left to the two Houses of Parliament. If that is so, what a state of things! This Government, with the greatest majority that has ever been known, are brought face to face with the greatest agricultural question that there is, and they have not arrived at a conclusion and apparently are going to leave the matter to the two Houses of Parliament to decide. If this Government goes on much longer in this way it will be known as the go-as-you-please Government. This is not the first instance.

We know, in the case of a Government Bill that was introduced the other day in the other House, that two days afterwards the Government agreed to the Second Reading of another Bill which was absolutely contrary to their own Bill. If my conjecture comes true and this matter is left to the House of Commons, then it is quite possible—though I do not say that it will happen—that my noble friend may find himself compelled to administer a law passed by the assistance of his own colleagues, which is in defiance of his own opinion, on a matter which most directly concerns his Department. I only regret that up to the present, at all events, we have been unable to extract from the Government any expression of what their real opinion is.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I am very glad that the noble Earl who has just sat down dotted some of the "i's" in the speech of the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture. I will not follow my noble friend in his comments upon the attitude which His Majesty's Government are apparently going to take up, but I do wish to join with him in appealing to them to have the courage of their opinions. This subject is surely one of such importance that in dealing with it His Majesty's Government ought to do something more than seek for the line of least resistance.

As far as it is possible to judge, the Government are delicately weighing the political value of the different factors in this calculation, and they are ready to surrender the opinions which we know they possess in order to prevent any internal difficulties from distracting their counsels. I listened with great satisfaction to the greater part of the speech of my noble friend, who showed how thoroughly acquainted he was with this subject and its history. It was, however, with no little disappointment that, after listening for some minutes to a speech which I for one interpreted as a preface to a statement that the Act was to be maintained, I heard the announcement that the question was to be left to be dealt with, as my noble friend Lord Camperdown has put it, in a go-as-you-please fashion.

The Earl of Camperdown.

The noble Lords who have addressed your Lordships to-night have stated in convincing terms the magnitude of the stake for which you are playing. I hope this question will not be discussed as if it were merely a question whether the interests of the Irish breeders of store cattle or the Scottish fatters of store cattle should prevail. The issue is a much larger one than that. It is an issue which has been described by Lord Desborough, speaking in the name of 99 per cent. of the farmers of this country, a figure which, unless I was mistaken, was admitted by the President of the Board of Agriculture. We know that what a serious outbreak of disease in this country means is not merely that the crofters in Scotland or the small breeders of cattle in Ireland are to be put to inconvenience. It means that the whole agricultural community is disorganised, and that the taxpayers have to put their hands in their pockets and provide for all the compensation and all the expensive machinery which has to be set up in order to keep the disease under control. These are issues of immense importance, and I do earnestly hope that His Majesty's Government will, in dealing with them, make up their minds to lead and not to follow, that they will give to the public and to Parliament that expert guidance which they are in a better position to give than any other body in this country. I would make only one other observation, and it has reference to the manner in which this question is regarded by the Dominion of Canada. I think it highly probable that it would be very agreeable to the Dominion if the embargo could be taken off Canadian cattle, but of this I am perfectly certain, that if we decide that the embargo shall be retained every sensible and reasonable Canadian will think we have a right to deal as we think proper with a matter which is, after all, a domestic matter concerning ourselves. That is how the Canadians deal with their own affairs. They have, as has been said during the course of the debate, extremely stringent quarantine regulations of their own, and they will not be in the least astonished if we come to the conclusion that, having regard to the immense and unprotected frontier of Canada, it is better for our interests that Canadian cattle—all cattle coming through Canada—should continue to be slaughtered at the port of entry. I have never been able to see why the imposition of that condition should really be very detrimental to Canadian stock-owners and stock-breeders, because, after all, what happens under the present system is that the Canadian farmer sends over to this country the finished article instead of the raw material or the half-manufactured article, and we know that this great trade in live cattle and in beef has not received any check from the regulations which it has been necessary to impose.

I merely rose to join my entreaties to those of my noble friends, and to express the hope that, if not to-night, at any rate before we are much older, His Majesty's Government will give not the opinion of individual Members of the Cabinet, but a distinct and decisive expression of the view of the Government as a whole upon a question which so greatly concerns the agricultural community of these islands.

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The MARQUESS of RIPON): My Lords, I entirely agree with the observations which were made by my noble friend who has just sat down in respect to the view which the Dominion of Canada is likely to take of any course which this country may think it necessary to pursue in regard to this important matter, and I will only say upon that, that that remark applies, not only to this question of cattle, but to other questions connected with the Dominion of Canada.

My noble friend has asked me to have the courage of my opinions. Well, I will tell my noble friend what those opinions are. But in order to do that I must ask your Lordships, even at this late hour, to allow me to go back for a few minutes to matters which were touched upon in the able speech of my noble friend Lord Burghclere. My noble friend recalled to your Lordships' recollection what passed in regard to the Act which was placed on the Statute book by the late Government in the year 1896. I, like my noble friend, opposed that Bill. I thought then, and as an abstract opinion I think now, that the regulations under the previous Act were sufficient for the purpose. My noble friend Lord Burghclere has shown from his experience at the Board of Agriculture that those regulations were fully fulfilling their purpose at that time, and I cannot say that if the question were to be dealt with now for the first time I should be convinced that we were wrong in 1896.

Those of your Lordships who recollect the discussion at that period will remember that that Bill was opposed, and strongly opposed, by men as interested in agriculture and as well acquainted with all its necessities and requirements as my noble friend Lord Spencer, and the late Lord Kimberley. Your Lordships will remember also that it was opposed by the great authority of Lord Herschel and also by Lord Rosebery. Those, my Lords, are names of importance and authority, as I am sure will be admitted on both sides of the House, and I honestly admit that if the question were coming forward again as it came forward in 1896 I should follow the course which I pursued on that occasion.

But there are many questions which have to be considered with respect to an Act which has been in operation for ten years. What may have been right then, what in theory might be sufficient now, is not necessarily the course which it would be wise at the present moment to take. There is an old adage, *Quod fieri non debuit factum valet*. That may apply to this case. His Majesty's Government are bound to consider carefully the currents of public opinion, both in Great Britain and in Ireland. The question is not quite such a simple one as some noble Lords opposite appear to think. It is a question beset by many difficulties and requiring grave consider ation. My noble friend who has just sat down, in his closing words, hoped if he did not get what he wanted from he Government on this occasion that he would get it before long. Well, if the noble Marquess is not satisfied to-night all that I can say is that he will be satisfied in a short time.

SEAMEN'S REMITTANCES.

*LORD ELLENBOROUGH rose to call attention to the charge of 3d. in the £. on all remittances from foreign ports when made by seamen of the mercantile marine, and to the Report of Lord Dudley's Committee in 1897, which said—

> "That the remittance fees under the money order and transmission systems are, in the case of larger sums unduly high, and deter seamen from remitting wages home,"

and in consequence of this recommended

> "That fees charged under the money order and transmission systems be abolished,"

and to ask His Majesty's Government whether, in the case of these fees being remitted, the indirect taxation on the greater expenditure of the wives and families due to the increased remittances of the seamen, and to the money being spent in Great Britain instead of a foreign country, would not have the effect of partly or entirely recouping the Treasury for the 2d. in the £. now paid to the consuls, and for the 1d. in the £. now paid to the Board of Trade.

The noble Lord had also the following notices on the Paper:—

To ask His Majesty's Government whether merchant seamen when paid abroad could not be allowed to transmit their wages to village post offices in the United Kingdom under the same conditions as when paid in England, instead of being only allowed to remit to certain seaports where their families may not be residing; and

To call attention to Section 141 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 (which is practically a repetition of clauses to be found in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1880); and to ask His Majesty's Government if returns exist showing how many signatures of men before the mast in the Merchant Service have been attached to agreements for voyages of over two months' duration since the "Merchant Seamen's Wages Act of 1880" came into existence, and in what proportion of these agreements seamen were allowed to allot half-wages or less monthly to a bank in accordance with that Act and with Section 141 of the "Merchant Shipping Act of 1894," and, if there are no such documents, whether the Government would cause to be compiled and presented to Parliament a return of the number of agreements and of the number of allotments that have been made by men before the mast during the last three years.

Lord Ellenborough.

The noble Lord said,—My Lords, it will, I think, save the time of the House if, with your Lordships' permission, I make but one speech, and ask the three Questions that stand in my name at its conclusion. This course has met with the approval of the noble Earl who represents the Board of Trade in this House.

As regards the 3d. in the £, which sailors have to pay on all remittances from foreign ports. I would point out that this practically amounts to an income tax of 3d. in the £, on the receipts of some of the poorest families in the United Kingdom, a tax too, the payment of which is often evaded by spending the whole of the income in the slums and drink shops of some foreign port, and thus leaving the families that these remittances would have supported a burden on the poor rates. The seaman may not land with the intention of spending the whole of his money. But he is known to have money about him. It is sometimes a case of one glass more with an old shipmate. That glass may be drugged by a third party. If the sailor had already remitted the bulk of his money, he would only lose shillings instead of pounds, or perhaps it might not be thought worth while to drug him.

From Return No. 38 presented to the House of Commons on the 20th February of this year, it appears that the average value of seamen's money orders amounts to £12. The total in many cases is much more than that. In the evidence taken in 1897 a case is mentioned of a carpenter who had £30, and who was advised by his captain to remit his money from Havre. He however refused to do so, and was in one night robbed of all he possessed. Thus he was left without a penny to send on to his wife and family. Other cases are mentioned of men who had £70 or £80. One man actually had £100 in gold. The Consul at Rotterdam advised him to take a money order, but he would not do so. He said he would take his money home with him instead of wasting 25s. on sending it. The Consul afterwards heard that he had been robbed. It seems rather hard that a seaman should have to pay eighty-five times as much as an ordinary person: that is 25s. for sending £100 from Rotterdam to England. Anyone who carries a cheque book sends it for 3½d., that being 1d. for the cheque and 2½d. postage of the letter.

I have reason to believe that in 1897, the Board of Trade were willing to surrender the charge of 3d. in the £, but that the Treasury objected. If that is the case I think that the Treasury took a very narrow view of the question, for the expense of the increased remittances, would, I think, be fully met by the gain to the Exchequer in the shape of indirect taxation. I find support to these views in an article in the April number of the *National Review*, by Mr. St. Loe Strachey, who has given some attention to social questions. Quoting from an article witten by Mr. Arthur Morrison, he points out that an average family of five living on an income of £78 a year (that is 30s. a week) would pay a total of 18s. 5d. in indirect taxes on tea, sugar, and coffee alone. The items are as follows: coffee 2s. 2d., tea, 6s. 6d., sugar 9s. 9d., which includes the sugar in jam and marmalade. If, however, instead of being a non-smoking, non-chewing, teetotal family, a few pipes and glasses were indulged in, the indirect taxation would soon mount up to £2 or £3. Now the fee for remitting £78 is 19s. 6d., so that if more money was remitted there would be a greater profit for the Exchequer. Then again, as the money spent on taxable articles would benefit the importers, some of whom may be wealthy men, a certain portion of this money would pay income tax before the year was out.

I consider that all money remitted from a foreign port to England instead of being spent abroad, and for which no merchandise has been sent in exchange, is clear gain to this country, just as much as if it dropped from the clouds. I also think that it is quite clear that the Treasury profits to a greater extent than 3d. in the £ from money sent to this country which would otherwise have been spent at say, Hamburg or San Francisco; therefore I think the Treasury might well arange to refund the 2d. which the Consuls charge on these remittances, and the 1d. which the Board of Trade gets too.

I now come to the second question—It would be a great boon to the mothers, wives, and families of seamen if money remitted from abroad was sent direct to the Post Office nearest to the seaman's home, instead of being sent to certain seaports where there are shipping offices. Respectable seamen often leave their families with their relatives in some inland town or country village far away from a seaport, or at a seaside place where there are no shipping offices. Why should a seaman be put to the expense of going to a seaport on his return to this country instead of going straight home. Even if the seaport is the one at which he lands, he may have to wait from Saturday to Monday. When paid off in the United Kingdom, a seaman can transmit his wages free of charge, without delay, to any village where there is a money order office. I should like to see extended to him when he remits from abroad the same privilege that he enjoys when he transmits his money when paid off in the United Kingdom. But when paid off abroad, he can only transmit to a Board of Trade office, or Custom House; he has to pay 3d. in the £, and often has to wait some days for his money.

Many mishaps may befall him during his stay there, if it is known that he has much money. Even if he is a Hull or a Liverpool man he probably does not live anywhere near the Board of Trade office, but in a suburb some miles distant. Why cannot the facilities given him when remitting from England be extended to him when remitting from abroad? Surely it is worth while taking som trouble in the matter and to give him every chance of avoiding temptation, and of keeping his relatives off the rates.

As regards my third question, I would remark that one of the chief causes of the bad discipline on board merchant ships is the antiquated system of payment, which still holds good in that service. At the commencement of the nineteenth century, when there were no regular means of communication, when mail steamers, express trains, and telegraph wires were non-existent, the system of withholding wages may have been necessary. During the last fifty years it has gradually disappeared from the Royal Navy, and I look upon that as one of the chief causes of the great improvement in discipline, and decrease of drunkenness in that service. Men who had not owned a coin for years, on suddenly finding themselves in possession of a bag of gold, naturally plunged into wild riot and dissipation; but now that the men of the Royal Navy are regularly paid, they conduct themselves quite as steadily as any other men belonging to the working classes. If a similar system of regular payment was adopted in the Merchant Service there is every reason to believe that similar results would follow. Men would be more contented, more likely to remain in the service instead of giving place to foreigners.

Twenty-six years ago Parliament admitted the principle that half or less of the wages of every seaman with more than a two months engagement should be paid to any near relative,or savings bank,if the seaman wished it. Of course, when once paid into a savings bank, the money would be entirely at the man's disposal. But unfortunately this clause was made optional, when it should have been made compulsory. Seamen were not as a rule strong enough to insist on its insertion, so that, though made use of by the officers, it has, I believe, been of little use to the men, and as I think it desirable that Parliament should know how far its expectations in 1880 and 1894, have been fulfilled, I have asked for this Return. Sometimes for a year or more the sailor receives nothing, and his family have to live on the same income. It is extremely inconvenient for sailors to be in harbour without a penny in their pockets, and in consequence of this they frequently borrow money at an exorbitant rate of interest, with the result that there is very little left for them when they are paid off. No doubt the wages due to sailors act as a check to desertion, but that alone should not weigh against other considerations. The seaman is much in the position of the working man before the Truck Act was passed, and as when on long voyages he must still continue to receive provisions, housing and other necessaries from his employers, a certain amount of special legislation is necessary to protect him and his family from the disadvantages of his position, and such legislation should not be considered as pampering him or as being grandmotherly. In the Royal Navy at the short morning service which is held every day when circumstances permit, the men pray, "That they may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land with the fruits of their labours." I hope that the Government will see its way to increase the chances of the merchant seaman being able to enjoy those advantages, I now beg to ask the Questions which stand in my name.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: The first Question asked by my noble friend has been more than once considered by His Majesty's Government, but up to the present they have not been able to see their way to make any change in the existing state of things or to justify themselves in incurring the extra expenditure. I feel, however, that it is a subject of great interest, and I believe that your Lordships will be of the same opinion as I am, namely, that it would be most advisable if we could induce seamen abroad to send the bulk of their wages home. The present charge of threepence in the pound is certainly not light, and I cannot deny that there is some force in the view expressed by Lord Dudley's Committee in the year 1897. But the difficulty of any step in this direction is, of course, that it involves financial considerations, though the fees that would be actually sacrificed do not amount to a great sum. As your Lordships are aware, of the threepence in the pound, twopence goes to the Consuls, and one penny is retained by the Board of Trade. With regard to the consuls, no doubt the Foreign Office would have something to say on the subject. We could not expect the consuls to go on doing the same work, and get no remuneration for it. But I can assure my noble friend that the whole of this question will again be carefully gone into and re-considered, and I will take the earliest opportunity of informing my noble friend of the decision arrived at.

I will now turn to the second Question of my noble friend which has reference to the Post Offices. The Postmaster-General has had this matter under consideration, and he is of opinion that the regulations as they stand do constitute a certain hardship on sailors abroad who desire to send their savings home. He has consequently issued orders that in the case of sailors sending their money home the orders may be cashed at any post office in the United Kingdom where at present money order business is transacted. That takes in virtually every post office in the country, the only exceptions being, perhaps, a few very small offices.

The third Question of my noble friend deals with a much more difficult matter. We have no return at all of the kind asked for in the Question, but we might be able to get a certain amount of the information which my noble friend requires. I will see what can be done in this matter, and I will let the noble Lord know as soon as possible what is the result of my inquiry.

THE ALIENS ACT.

The EARL of CAMPERDOWN: May I put to the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack the Question which stands in my name, viz., whether he is now prepared to give his interpretation of the words in Section 1, Sub-section (3), of the Aliens Act, 1905, which he undertook to consider.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): The Act provides that in the case of an immigrant who proves that he is seeking admission to this country in order to avoid persecution on religious or political grounds, he may be admitted, even though he falls within the description of an undesirable immigrant. This cannot mean that he has to prove all the facts in regular form of law by sworn evidence, for there is no provision in the Act to allow an oath, or to empower the officer to call or swear a witness, and he has no court or anything like it. I think the Act means that the officer is to judge on the best information he can get and to make up his mind as well as he can. It is a very clumsy piece of legislation. Generally no information on the subject can be obtained except from the immigrant himself or by common fame. If in these circumstances the officer feels some doubt as to how he should make up his mind, I see no reason why he should not give the immigrant what is called the benefit of the doubt. That is my view of the construction of the Act. I have just one word to say in regard to a matter collateral with, or rather following upon, this. The Act is very much wanting in precision, as a good many Acts are in these days, I am sorry to say, and must be looked at fairly and as a whole. For example, no one will suppose that Parliament intended the Act to be so construed as that a woman or child who would perish if refused admission ought to be refused, or that a man who would go back to certain execution for his religious opinions should be turned back; and yet, if the very strictest letter of construction be placed on the Act, that might in some circumstances be the result. This, like all other Acts, ought to be reasonably construed.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: May I ask a Question on what the noble and learned Lord has said? With regard to proof, he said that the proof was not necessarily strict legal proof, but that it must be the best proof available, and must satisfy the immigration officer. I think that was the substance of the noble and learned Lord's statement. That being so, would it be in accordance with the law to instruct an immigration officer as to what was to satisfy him instead of leaving him to satisfy himself?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: There is nothing in the Act which gives a direction one way or the other as to whether instructions can be given. If the instructions be outside the Act the immigration officer must have regard to them the same as anybody else.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am sure my noble and learned friend, Lord Halsbury, regrets that he is not able to be there this evening, but he has had to leave London. In his absence any discussion of the legal interpretation of the Act on my part would be mere impertinence. I will only say that what I think moved my noble friend most was the idea that with an Act containing a certain provision any Minister, however distinguished, should assume to himself the right of making that provision, even assuming it to be faulty, of none avail by his administrative action.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I also am sorry that Lord Halsbury is not here. I quite agree that no Minister ought to have that power of dispensing with an Act of Parliament, but what I wish the noble Marquess and other noble Lords just to think of is what the effect would be if they put a certain construction on the Act which Parliament intended to be humane as well as to provide an effective preventive against the immigration of undesirable aliens. To strain the construction of the Act might produce results which every Member of this House would deplore. It ought to be reasonably construed for the purpose of carrying out the fair spirit of the Act. May I say this further, with regard to what the noble Marquess had said. If he desires it—I do not think he would—I will ask the Home Secretary to communicate to the officers the opinion that I expressed in the first instance to-night, about the proper construction of the Act. I believe, however, that the common-sense of the officers themselves will lead them to the same conclusion.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I certainly would not take it upon myself, in the absence of my noble and learned friend, to make that suggestion.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 5*th April*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied, with, viz:—

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Watford Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill. Mr. Chance, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Mr. James Parker, Mr. Watson Rutherford, and Mr. Luke White were nominated Members of the Select Committee on the London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Provisional Order (Marriages) Bill, "to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under the Provisional Order (Marriages) Act, 1905," presented by Mr. Herbert Samuel; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 147.]

Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill, "to authorise the Corporation of Shrewsbury to construct additional Waterworks; and for other purposes." Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill; Uxbridge Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments. Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Proceedings.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

Bill to be read the third time.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Wallis' Divorce

Bill [Lords], together with the Documents deposited in each case, be returned to the House of Lords; and that the Clerk do carry the same.—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to establish Limited Partnerships." [Limited Partnerships Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to revive and extend the powers for the purchase of land and the time limited for the completion of the railway authorised by the Wirral Railway Act, 1898; to extend the time for the sale of surplus lands of the Wirral Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise agreements betwen the Manchester Ship Canal Company and the owners of or persons interested in the minerals under or adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal; and for other purposes." [Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords.]

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour:—From Burnley; Devonport; Forfarshire; Gillingham; Glasgow; Ramsgate; St. Helens; and, West Bromwich; to lie upon the Table.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL.

Petition from Rosemarkie, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Chertsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Abingdon; Ailsworth; Ashton-under-Lyne (two); Audlem; Batheaston; Birmingham; Blackburn (three); Blaisdon; Bolton; Bulford; Cantref; Castor; Chichester; Clifton; Crookbank; Croughton; Darwen (four); Deddington (two); Devonport; Dover (two); Eartham (two); East Chiltington (two); East Clevedon; East Harptree; Edlington (two); Edmonton; Ewood Bridge; Fallowfield and Ladybarn (two); Fatfield; Fawley (two); Funtington; Garstang (two); Gayton; Gerrard's Cross; Glodwick; Goosey; Great and Little Bourton (two); Ham (two); Hampstead; Hansworthy; Hanwell (two); Harome; High Wycombe; Hoath; Hoddlesden (two); Holton St. Mary; Hook Norton (two); Horncastle; Horwick; Kew; Keynsham (two); Kirby Misperton; Lamesley (two); Langley; Leire; Little Brickhill; Little Stanmore; Little Whittingham; Llanfihangel; Longridge (two); Mansel Lacy (two); Marcham (two); Medomsley; Mellor; Merthyr Cynog (two); Milton (two); Moulsoe (two); Musbury; Newbottle; Northampton; Norton (two); Nursling; Old Bewick; Oldham; Patching; Pattingham; Peel; Pelton; Perworth (two); Portishead; Poulshot; Quidgely; Rackham; Reculver; Richmond; Ryburgh (two); Ryde; St. Jude's, Southwark; St. Peter, Sowerby; Salford; Shenington (two); Silkstone; Silverstone; Sonning; Stainborough (two); Stanford in the Vale; (two) Stowe Nine Churches; Taunton; Temple Ewell; Thorpe; Tickenham (three); Timsbury (two); Tudhoe (two); Uploadon; Upton (two); Walmersley (three); Walshaw; Wandsworth; Wark on Tyne; Weedon (two); Wellingore (two); Westmeston (two); Whittlebury;

Winchester; Windlesham (two); Withybrook (two); Wittenham; and, Wotton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition; From Bilston; Birmingham; Chorley; Crewkerne (two); and, Lumb in Rossendale; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (MONMOUTHSHIRE).

Petition from Burnage, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF WHISKY BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3545 to 3548 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (BOROUGH OF BURTON-UPON-TRENT).

Copy presented—of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Burton-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND).

Copy presented—of Rule dated 20th March, 1906, made by the Lord Chancellor in substitution of Rule of No. 18 of the Summary Jurisdiction Rules, 1886 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented—of Return of Proceedings during the month of February, 1906 [by command]: to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS).

Copies represented—of Reports Nos. 32 (Northern Nigeria, First Report on the Results of the Mineral Survey of Northern Nigeria, 1904–5, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.), 33 (Southern Nigeria, Reports on Mineral Survey for 1903–4 and 1904–5, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.), 34 (Montserrat, Report on the Agricultural Industries, by Mr. F. Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc.), 35 (Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis, Report on Sugar Industry, by Mr. F. Watts, C.M.G., D.Sc.), 36 (West Indies, Reports on the Working of the Imperial Department of Agriculture) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UGANDA RAILWAY ACTS, 1896 AND 1902.

Account presented—showing the Money issued from the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of the Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), and 1902 (2 Edw. 7, c. 40), and of the Money expended and borrowed, and Securities created under the said Acts, to 31st March, 1905, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.]

TREES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing the number of Trees registered with the clerks of the peace in the different counties in Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 253, of Session 1883)."—(*Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh.*)

TRAMWAYS AND LIGHT RAILWAYS (STREET AND ROAD).

Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways and Light Railways authorised by Act or Order showing the amount of capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of line authorised, and the length open for public traffic down to December 31st, 1905, in respect of companies, and March 31st, 1906 in respect of local authorities; the gross receipts, working expenditure, net receipts, and appropriation of net receipts; the number of passengers conveyed, the number of miles run by cars, and the quantity of electrical energy used during the year ended on the foregoing dates respectively; together with the number of horses, engines, and cars at those dates (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 322, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Derelict Steamer in the Atlantic.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the attention of the Admiralty has been drawn to the fact that the derelict steamer "Dunmore," which was abandoned by her crew several weeks ago, is drifting in the Atlantic on the direct route between this country and North America, to the danger of vessels trading between these countries; and whether steps will be taken by the Admiralty to have her destroyed as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The reports recently received have shown that the "Dunmore" is in the track of Atlantic traffic and is drifting rapidly eastwards, and, though the Joint Committee of the Admiralty and Board of Trade of 1894 came to the conclusion that the number of well-established casualties from collisions with derelicts in the open sea is very small, in this case it is thought desirable to take action, and the Fourth Cruiser Squadron is at once to receive orders to search for the "Dunmore."

Importation of Scotch Carts into Ireland.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the manager of the agricultural farm at Athenry, acting under instructions received from the Agricultural Board, is importing newly-made cars and carts from Aberdeen, while articles of the same shape and pattern, but of a better and cheaper make, are sold and manufactured in the neighbourhood.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that it is not the case that the manager of the agricultural station at Athenry is importing newly-made cars or carts from Aberdeen. Only one such cart was imported last year; and it was brought over with the object of affording the apprentices at the station an opportunity of comparing a Scotch type of cart with those in use in Ireland and England. Of the six carts at Athenry, four were made in Ireland, one in Scotland, and one in England. The latest cart brought to Athenry came from, and was made in, the King's County. Three carts made in the neighbourhood of Athenry are in use upon the farm.

The Post Office Servants Inquiry.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will include the established sub-postmasters (head office scale) in the inquiry as to pay and promotion.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will distinguish the class of head office system sub-postmasters from that of sub-office system sub-postmasters, the latter of whom are shopkeepers, and designate the farmer as postmasters (second class).

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will raise the established sub-post offices in towns with a population over 10,000 to the rank of head post offices, so as to give greater scope for promotion to head postmasterships.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I had perhaps better answer together the hon. Member's three Questions in regard to sub-postmasters paid on the head office scale. It is for the Select Committee on Post Office servants to decide whether they will consider such officers as falling within the terms of their reference. The duties of such sub-postmasters are not parallel with those of head postmasters, nor would the alteration of title which the hon. Member proposes describe their *status* more accurately than their present designation; but it has been decided that two classes of sub-offices will be called by the more convenient names of "salaried sub-offices" and "commission sub-offices." It is not the population of a town which is the ruling factor in deciding whether or not to institute a head office there, but the amount and character of the post office duty to be performed; and it is not possible in any case to create superior appointments with the view of stimulating promotion.

Pay of Dublin Mail Cart Drivers.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the mail cart drivers in Dublin complain that the Fair Wages Resolution of the House is violated in their employment, and also that their conditions of labour are unusual; and whether he will make inquiries into the matter with a view to having this alleged grievance remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) On receiving complaints in regard to the matter I caused inquiry to be made on the subject. The inquiry is not yet complete; but I am glad to learn that an improvement has already been effected in the conditions of employment, both in regard to hours and wages of some of the men referred to.

Site of Post Office at Bangor (County Down).

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received the resolution adopted with only two dissentients at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Bangor, county Down, on the subject of the site selected for the new post office; and whether, before proceeding further with the contemplated arrangements, he will take care to ascertain whether they are likely to be productive of great public inconvenience.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to a meeting held in Bangor, county Down, on the 23rd ultimo, in reference to the selection of a site for the post office in that town; whether he is aware that the resolution in favour of the proposed site was carried at the district council by the chairman, who is the vendor of the site in question, giving a second or casting vote in its favour; and whether, as the site is in an inconvenient district and objected to by a large number of the inhabitants, he will take these facts into account before deciding between the various sites.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In reply to the hon. Member's Question and to the unstarred Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone (South Division) which I may, perhaps, answer at the same time, a report of the public meeting referred to has been sent to this Department, and I have also received a copy of the resolution carried at that meeting. I am not aware of the circumstances under which the resolution in favour of the site which has been selected was carried at a meeting of the district council. It is reported that the resolution was finally carried by seven votes to five. The question of a site for the new post office was very carefully considered, and the position of the proposed new office, at the corner of Main Street and Castle Square, is deemed on the whole the most suitable. But under the circumstances I have called for a further Report in the matter.

Imports of French Motor Cars.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many motor cars were imported into this country from France during each of the months of January, February, and March, and the value of them; and how many were exported from this country into France during the same months and the value of them.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The following figures give the information asked for—

Statement showing the number and value of Motor Cars imported into and exported from the United Kingdom in its trade with France during the months of January, February, and March, 1906.

	Number.	Value.
Motor cars imported from France in—		£
January	343	128,128
February	385	143,934
March	443	157,470
Motor cars of British or Irish manufacture exported to France in—		
January	5	3,300
February	2	1,100
March	3	1,700
Motor cars of Foreign or Colonial manufacture exported to France in—		
January	10	4,570
February	12	7,700
March	13	9,675

Registration of School Teachers.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to Section 4 of the Board of Education Act of 1899, under which provision is taken for the setting up of a register of teachers to contain the names of the registered teachers arranged in alphabetical order, with an entry after the name of each showing the date of registration, and giving a brief record of his qualifications and experience; whether, under this section, Orders in Council were adopted on March 6th, 1902, and August 11th, 1902, providing for the setting up of a register of teachers in two columns, one confined to teachers eligible for service in public elementary schools, and the other to teachers eligible for service in schools other than elementary; and whether, in view of the difference between the terms of the Act and the terms of the Orders in Council, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) My attention has been called to the discrepancy referred to. I am satisfied that the register in its present shape, even if legal, which seems to be doubtful, gives justifiable dissatisfaction to various branches of the teaching profession. Further, no alterations which would remove these objections have been found possible, and it has therefore been decided that a clause should be inserted in the coming Bill which, if passed by Parliament, will have the effect of bringing the register to an end. Arrangements will be made for returning the fees.

Action of the Police against John Brown, at Ballickmoylar.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the case of the King *v.* John Brown, at Ballickmoylar, Queen's County, petty sessions, on the 16th instant, the defendant being charged with assault; whether he is aware that when Brown was brought before a local magistrate, the doctor certified that the person assaulted was not seriously hurt; that substantial bail, offered for Brown's appearance at petty sessions, was refused by the magistrate, on the application of the policeman who brought the charge; and that Brown was handcuffed and driven a distance of twenty-two miles, without an overcoat, to Kilkenny Gaol, and kept there for nine days; can he say how many magistrates were present at the hearing of the case; did the doctor swear that the wound was caused by a blow of the hand, and that he did not consider it dangerous; was the accused discharged by unanimous decision of the bench; and whether, in view of the irritation in the district caused by the conduct of the acting sergeant in charge at Doonane station, steps will be taken to prevent the law being strained to magnify simple offence into serious crime; and what are the costs incurred in the case, and will the costs be charged on the county rates.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that in this case the accused was charged with a serious assault. The local police opposed bail in the first instance because the injured person was confined to bed, suffering from an incised wound in the head, and the doctor would not certify that his life was not then in danger. I am informed that Brown was handcuffed and driven twenty-one miles to Kilkenny Gaol without an overcoat, but that he had ample time and opportunity to provide himself with one. After a week's remand the accused was admitted to bail, as the doctor then certified that the injured man was out of danger. The case was eventually heard by six magistrates, who unanimously convicted the accused, but, as he had already suffered a week's imprisonment they ordered him to be kept in custody until the rising of the court only. The doctor's evidence was that the wound was of an incised nature, but might have been caused by a blow. He also stated that he did not consider the wound to be dangerous. The Inspector-General is not aware that any irritation has been caused in the district, and he is of the opinion that the local police were justified in the action taken by them. The cost amounted to £2 12s., none of which is chargeable to the county rates.

Irish Land Purchase—Table of Redemption Annuities.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners will arrange to have printed on the back of the paying-in orders a table of redemption amounts, showing the redemption annuity of multiples of £10 up to £200.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the proposal contained in the Question is not practicable, having regard to the provisions of Section 46 of The Irish Land Act, 1903. The amount to be paid for the redemption of an annuity in any particular case depends upon the price of Guaranteed 2¾ per cent. stock at the date of the application for redemption.

Irish Land Purchase Premiums.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what amount per cent. of premium a tenant purchaser would have to lodge in cash to redeem his holding on the date of commencement of his advance; to what credit such premiums are placed; and whether, having regard to the fact that the premium discourages tenants from redeeming, it is intended to continue the existing practice.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) This Question appears to be based upon a misapprehension. I am informed by the Land Commission that tenant purchasers are not required to pay a premium on redemptions. Having regard to the provisions of Section 46 of the Act of 1903, a purchase annuity may be redeemed by payment of the difference between the amount of the accumulated sinking fund and the sum sufficient to purchase the requisite amount of stock to replace the amount of stock issued to provide the purchase-money for the advance. The amount to be paid, therefore, depends on the price for which stock was issued at the time of the advance, and the price at which it can be purchased at the date of the redemption.

Constable Fired on at Moorpark.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Saturday night last, when between Athenry and Moorpark, Constable Gaffney, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and a herd named Broderick, who is in the employment of Mr. Frank Shawe-Taylor, were fired upon by a person or persons concealed in a wood by the side of the road; whether the constable was wounded; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received a police report as to this occurrence, which indicates that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. Both the constable and Broderick were injured in the legs by pellets of small shot, but not seriously. No arrests have yet been made.

Dromore Urban Councillors and Dromore Gas Company.

Mr. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that four of the nine urban councilllors of Dromore, county Down, are shareholders in the Dromore Gas Company, who are contractors to the urban council; and, if so, what action the Local Government Board proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board understand that the facts are as stated. Article 12 (5) (c) of the schedule to the Local Government (Application of Enactments) Order, 1898, provides that a person shall not be disqualified for being a member of a council by reason of being, by himself or his partner, interested in any contract with the council as a shareholder in any joint stock company.

Cattle Outrage at Blackslea.

Mr. JORDON (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that on Sunday, the 25th March, at Blackslea, Churchill Derrygonnolly, county Fermanagh, an outrage was committed on the cattle of Mr. James Corrigan, by cutting off the tails of three of his cows; is he aware that Mr. Corrigan is a respectable and inoffensive citizen; if he can say whether this and other offences lately perpetrated in that locality have arisen out of the late election in North Fermanagh; and what steps he proposes to take in reference to such displays of intimidation and violence in this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that, on the date mentioned, the hair was cut off the tails of three cows, the property of Mr. Corrigan, and in one of the cases the flesh also was slightly cut. I do not doubt that Mr. Corrigan is a most respectable citizen. The data at my disposal do not enable me to say positively whether the motive for the injury was a political one, connected with the recent election. It is the fact that Mr. Corrigan took a prominent part in the election. The district in question is in a generally peaceful state, and it does not appear to be necessary to take any special steps for the preservation of the peace.

Suggested Monthly Payment of Irish School Teachers' Salaries.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the system of quarterly payments causes much inconvenience to many national school teachers in Ireland; how often are English and Scottish teachers paid; and could a system of monthly pay-days be established for teathers in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I believe that the system of quarterly payments does cause inconvenience to many teachers. In England and Scotland teachers are paid by the local authorities. The Board of Education inform me that, though they have no direct knowledge, they believe that as a rule teachers are paid monthly by those authorities. The payments made by the Board of Education itself to the local authorities are made annually. The National Board, as I stated two days ago, think that it would be very difficult for them to institute the monthly system in Ireland without enormously increasing their staff. With such an increase the change could no doubt be made. The question is really one of expense.

Suggested Removal of Police Hut from Dromod.

Mr. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the crimelessness of the district, as evidenced by the recent charge of the judge of assize, and to the fact that the reasons for its erection have ceased to exist, he will suggest to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary the advisability of having the police hut removed from Dromod, near Ballybay, county Monaghan.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that the police hut in question was erected nearly twenty years ago for the purpose of protection. It is the case that the mmediate purpose for which the hut was erected no longer exists, but as the nearest police station is five miles distant the hut has been retained as a temporary police station. The locality is very peaceful, and the Inspector-General will at an early date consider the question whether the hut may be abolished.

Delay in Publishing Results of Examinations of Intermediate Education Board.

Mr. McKEAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will press upon the Intermediate Education Board the desirability of completing the publication of the results of their annual examination within a shorter period than six or seven months from the beginning of the examination, as was the case for 1905, and the necessity of annually publishing not later than April, as was originally the practice, its rules and programme for the school year commencing in the following August, seeing that the publication in 1905 was later than it had been before.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Intermediate Education Board that both the pass lists, and the exhibition, and prize lists were published in a little over two months from the conclusion of the examinations in 1905. The hon. Member probably refers to revised exhibition and prize lists which were subsequently issued as the result of the award by the Board of additional exhibitions. The Board expect to publish the rules and programme for 1907 in the course of the present month.

Sir Antony MacDonnell

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.). To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the salary of Sir Antony MacDonnell; what is the designation of his present office; what is the patronage at his disposal; is he a Minister of the Crown or a civil servant; and when are his services likely to be dispensed with.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The salary and designation of Sir Antony MacDonnell's office will be found at page 200 of the Estimates for Civil Services, Class 2, for the present financial year. No patronage is at his disposal except the post of his own private secretary, and it is intended to retain his services as long as possible.

Irish Main Roads.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many, and what, counties in Ireland have no main roads; in what counties has the no-main-roads declaration been reversed by the Local Government Board; and whether, seeing that the county council and the majority of the rural and urban councils are dissatisfied with the Board's action in the matter, he will ask for a re-consideration of the whole matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that in twenty-two counties declarations have been made by the county councils that there should be no main roads. In sixteen of these counties, the names of which I will communicate to the hon. Member, there were no formal appeals, and the provisional declaration of the county councils, therefore, became absolute without any decision of the Local Government Board. Six cases came under the jurisdiction of the Board. In the case of Antrim, Down, and Waterford the no-main-road declaration was reversed after inquiry and full and careful consideration of the evidence and circumstances in each case, while in the case of Meath, Monaghan, and Tipperary (North Riding), the no-main-road declaration was upheld.

Flogging in Irish Prisons.

MR. RICHARD HAZLETON (Galway, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether flogging is permitted as a disciplinary measure in Irish prisons; and, if so, how many cases have taken place during the year 1905, and with whom rests the power of authorising this punishment.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that corporal punishment with the cat or birch rod is legal, and is permitted in the case of male convicts, but not of local prisoners. One case of corporal punishment took place during the year 1905, namely, at Maryborough convict prison. The power of authorising such punishment is vested by statute in the General Prisons Board.

Sale of Estates in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many estates have been sold, or are in process of being sold, in county Clare under the Land Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that agreements between landlords and tenants have been lodged in respect of seventy-seven estates in county Clare. In the case of twenty of these estates advances have been made, and the holdings vested in the tenants. In addition, the Commissioners have had inquiries made into the circumstances of five estates in the same county, with a view to their purchase under sections 6 and 7, and they have, so, far, agreed to purchase one of these estates.

Irish Land—Sales on First-term Rents.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an estate sold under the Act of 1903, where the price ranges between eighteen and a-half years and twenty-four and a-half years' purchase on first-term rents, and between twenty-one and a-half and twenty-seven and three-quarters years' purchase on second-term rents, there is no inspection by the Government for security of advance, when the price ranges between ten and eighteen years' purchase on first-term rents, prices at which many estates were sold under the Ashbourne and Balfour Acts, the holdings must be inspected to ascertain if there is security for the advance; and whether the Estates Commissioners will be instructed not to sanction sales on first-term rents until an inspector of the Land Commission reports on the question of security for the advance.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the figures given in the Question as to the limit of the operations of the zone system under the Act of 1903 appear to be correct. The Commissioners are of opinion that they are bound under the statute to make advances within the zones on lands declared by them to be fit to be regarded as an estate. The matter, being regulated by statute, is not within the sphere of action of the Irish Government.

Police Evidence.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a circular has recently been issued to the Metropolitan Constabulary of London, warning the members of the force against allowing personal considerations of any kind whatever to affect their sworn testimony, and pointing out to them that it is their duty to give not only the facts which tell against the accused, but also to give the facts which tell in his favour, and further stating that a grave view will be taken of any failure in this respect; and whether he will consider the advisability of issuing a similar circular to the members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force and the members of the Royal Irish Constabularly.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand from the newspapers that the fact is as stated in the Question. I have communicated with the heads of both the Royal Irish Constabularly and the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and I learn that, in both cases, the official regulations contain explicit instructions to the effect indicated in the Question. I have seen these instructions, which deal fully with this very important matter. I am informed that it is it not considered necestary to issue fresh instructions on the subject.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of the estates where sales take place under the Land Act, on the basis of the current gale of rent, the hanging gale and arrears being added to the amount of the purchase-money, the bonus of 12 per cent. is paid on all such additions, as if they were part of the purchase-money; and, if so, will he consent to amend the Act in this particular in any future amending legislation which may be deemed necessary.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) As stated in an Answer to a similar Question, which I gave on the 27th March,† the bonus under the Act is payable in the case put. Whether the law ought to be changed on this point deserves to be considered but I am not at present able to deliver the view of the Government on this subject.

Tullaroan Estate.

MR. MEAGHER: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of years' purchase asked by Mr. Thomas Scully for the estate at Tullaroan which he recently offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners, and also the number of years' purchase offered by the said Estates Commissioners and which was refused by Mr. Scully.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have already informed the hon. Member that the Estates Commissioners made an offer for this estate which the owner was not prepared to accept. The Commissioners do not think that it would be proper for them to disclose the particulars asked for, which they regard as confidential.

Cultivation of Flax in Ulster.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the great falling off in the acreage under flax in Ulster, due to the increasing difficult—in procuring a sufficient number of hands, within forty-eight hours, to steep, spread, and gather it, with the result that the fibre was often deteriorated in quality if not entirely lost; whether he will suggest to the authorities in Ulster, who are entrusted with the carrying out of the Labourers Act, the necessity, in the interest of flax cultivation, of planting on the land the labourers who have been driven off it; and whether he will bring under the notice of the Congested Districts Board and the Agricultural Board the advisability of trying flax growing in the congested districts of Connaught, where female labour is cheap and abundant.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Department of Agriculture that prior to the year 1897 there was a considerable falling off in the production of flax in Ulster, but that since that year the production has been practically constant. The Department are of opinion that scarcity of labour is a cause, though not the chief cause, of the decline of flax growing in Ulster. The Department's scheme for improvement of the flax-growing industry is in operation in two counties, of which portions are congested, namely Mayo and Donegal. In these two counties shows of scutched flax have been held for several seasons, and prizes awarded to the growers and scutchers of the best lots, and also to the owners of mills in which the best lots were scutched. The Congested Districts Board do not now carry out general schemes for the improvement of agriculture, their operations in that respect having been transferred to the Department. I trust that the policy of providing better houses for labourers may result in securing a greater supply of labour in the agricultural districts referred to.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clіv., 1054.

Sales of Irish Estates.

Mr. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the agricultural tenants on the estate of Lamberts Minors, Athenry, county Galway, have been negotiating with the Receivers to the Lord Chancellor for the purchase of their holdings for the past eighteen months; that the negotiations have broken through owing to the demands made by the Receiver; and will he say if a memorial has been received from these tenants asking for a reduction of 20 per cent., which they would have received if the sale had gone through; and, seeing that there is no possibility of an agreement being arrived at as between the Receiver and the tenants, and that legal proceedings have been taken against them, will he request the Estates Commissioners to interfere, in the hope that an amicable arrangement may be arrived at for the sale of this estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to my Answer to the hon. Member's Question of 22nd March.† As I then stated, the estate in question is being managed by the Land Judge on behalf of the Lord Chancellor. The registrar of the Land Judge's Court informs me that he has no further information upon the subject than has already been given, but that he will make additional inquiries in the matter. I have already indicated that the case does not appear to be one in which the Estates Commissioners could intervene, having regard to their statutory powers.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have refused to treat the estate in county Cavan, known as the Morley estate, as an estate for the purposes of the Land Act of 1903; whether the syndicate who purchased the property from the late Earl Morley are now proceeding against the tenants for the full rent due, although the rent had been subject to a voluntary abatement of 6s. 8d. in the £.; and whether, under all the circumstances of this case, arbitration and proposed sale having proved abortive, he will represent to the Land Commission the advisability of sending at once a special Commissioner to hear the applications for fair rents which have been lodged by the tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand that the estate mentioned is the same estate which was the subject of Questions put to me on 28th March and 3rd April by the hon. Member for West Cavan; and I beg to refer to my replies to those Questions.‡ It will be seen that only very few applications to fix fair rents on the estate remain undisposed of; that these have been but recently lodged; and that they will be heard at the next sitting for the district. The Land Commission do not think it necessary to hold a special sub-Commission court for these cases, and I have no power to interfere with their discretion in the matter.

Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in making new appointments to the Irish Land Commission, now contemplated by the Government, or any additions thereto, in future, he will consider the desirability of seeing that some of the appointments would be given to applicants having a knowledge of the Irish language; whether he is aware that inconvenience has been caused to Irish-speaking tenants in these courts in the West of Ireland, where Irish is the spoken language of the people; and whether steps will be taken to remove this inconvenience.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am obliged to the hon. Member for the suggestion he has made. Although I am informed that there are comparatively few tenants who speak only the Irish language, I think it desirable that if possible, and I assume it would be possible, there should be among the Assistant Land Commissioners one or more persons having a knowledge of the Irish language, and this will be borne in mind, subject of course to the prime obligation on the Government of securing the men most competent by their knowledge of land for the work of assistant Commissioners.

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‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 592.

† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1281; clv., 368.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether the average number of years purchase under the Ashbourne Act of 1885 for Cork County is 15·1, and for county Limerick 15·4; whether the average number of years' purchase for these counties under the Acts of 1891 and 1896 is Cork 16·5 and Limerick 16·8 during the period ended 31st March, 1903; what is the average number of years' purchase in counties Cork and Limerick sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners under the Purchase Act of 1903 up to the 1st January, 1906; and how many years' purchase does the bonus of 12 per cent. on these sales amount to.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the prices under the Ashbourne Acts will be found in the annual reports of the Irish Land Commissioners. The prices sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners up to 31st March, 1905, will be found in their report for the period ending on that date, and the figures for the year now ended will appear in the next annual report, now in course of preparation. The Estates Commissioners inform me that it would cause serious delay in the carrying out of their regular work to detach members of their staff for the purpose of compiling statistics piecemeal, the greater part of which has already appeared.

Importation of Canadian Cattle into Ireland.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the Resolution passed by the rural district council of Strokestown, county Roscommon, protesting against the removal of the existing restrictions on the importation of Canadian cattle to Ireland; and will he say what action, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received the Resolution referred to. I have already pointed out that the interests of Ireland in this matter will be duly considered. The existing prohibition against the importation of cattle cannot be removed without legislation.

Extra Police at Tulsk, County Roscommon.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say at whose instance, and for what reason, on the 11th March a body of police under a county inspector and two district inspectors was drafted into Tulsk, county Roscommon; whether this action of the authorities will entail additional expense upon the district; and whether, seeing that the number of police stationed at Tulsk barracks has been increased from five to eleven, he will state when this number will be reduced, in view of the peaceable state of the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) A force of police was assembled, at the instance of the police authorities, on the occasion mentioned for the preservation of the peace in connection with a meeting which it was feared would result in intimidation. No additional expense will be entailed upon the local authorities. It is the case that the police force at Tulsk station has been increased to the number mentioned. This increase is considered by the police authorities to be for the present advisable, but a reduction will be made as soon as the circumstances warrant it.

Trinity College (Dublin) Estates.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the paragraphs in the report of the Trinity College (Dublin) Estates Commissioners in which it is stated that what is known as the Provost's estate was not included in any return made to them by the College, although the Government valuation of the lands comprising that property was stated in 1851 to be over £2,600, and that no information was furnished to them in any other form in reference of this particular source of the college revenue; and whether, in view of this statement, the terms of reference to the proposed new Commission of Inquiry into matters connected with Trinity College will be so framed as to secure that full information shall, if possible, be obtained as to the nature and value of the so-called Provost's estate and the objects to which the profits of the estate are devoted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The terms of reference to the proposed Commission of Inquiry have not yet been definitely settled, but I have announced in general terms that the inquiry will deal with the revenues of Trinity College and the manner in which they are applied. I am not aware whether the revenue from the property known as the Provost's estate forms part of the college revenues, but if it does the Commission will, of course, deal with the matter.

Sale of Grazing Farm at Mile Hill.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the fact that a man named Martin May, a shopkeeper living in Ballinrobe, took a grazing farm at Mile Hill, in the parish of the Neale, county Mayo, some years ago, that this farm is now before the courts for sale, and that there are a number of persons in that district who are forced to live on the uneconomic holdings; and whether he will immediately instruct the Estates Commissioners to have the place inspected and taken over from the courts, with a view to having it split up in such a way that some of the holdings of cottier farmers in the locality may be enlarged.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the estate in question cannot be identified from the particulars given either by the Estates Commissioners or by the officers of the courts. If the hon. Member will furnish the name of the owner of the estate further inquiries will be made.

Inscription on a Cork Monument.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that on the 17th March last a monument, erected in honour of certain Irishmen, was unveiled in a public street in Cork by the Rev. Patrick Kavanagh, P.P., on which an inscription stated that it was erected in memory of certain men who fought and died in the wars of Ireland to recover her independence, and to inspire the youth of Ireland to follow in their footsteps and imitate their example; and whether it is the intention of the Government to allow this inscription to remain.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I was not aware of the facts stated in the Question, but am willing to believe that they are so if the hon. Member states them. It is not to be assumed that such of the youth of Ireland as may read the inscription mentioned will, under the happier conditions which now prevail, conceive that the welfare of Ireland is to be promoted by any such methods as were resorted to by those whom the monument commemorates. I hope that the time may soon arrive when conflicts and enmities that belong to the past may cease to excite passions disturbing the minds of the present generation.

Application for Reinstatement by Tenants on Lord De Vesci's Estate.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many evicted tenants on Lord De Vesci's estate, Abbeyleix, Queen's County, have made representation to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement to their holdings; whether he can state what is the extent of untenanted land upon the De Vesci property let on the eleven months' system; and whether the Commissioners have approached the owner with a view to the purchase of the same; and, if so, with what results.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received nine applications for reinstatement from persons claiming to have been evicted from this estate. No proceedings for the sale of the estate have come before the Commissioners, nor have they sought to purchase it. They have no knowledge of the extent of untenanted land on the estate.

Cost of Battalion Stationed at Maritzburg.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the total annual cost of the British battalion now stationed at Maritzburg, including a due allowance for the cost of training and provisioning of the troops; and how much of that total is contributed by the colony of Natal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The battalion now stationed at Pietermaritzburg is the remnant of the Royal Garrison regiment, and the cost may be estimated at about £13,000 a year, towards which Natal pays £4,000.

Tactical Survey of Coast Line of United Kingdom.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is to be understood that the tactical survey of portions of the coast line of the United Kingdom have already been completed, but that the survey of the probable lines of advance from the likely landing-places along that coast line, and of the defensive positions commanding those lines of advance, have not been, and are not to be carried out, although forming an integral and essential part of the original scheme; and whether he will consent to modify his decision to suspend this survey, at any rate to the extent of permitting the scheme of work already commenced to be completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The tactical reconnaissance of some portions of the coast line and the country in its immediate vicinity has been completed. It has been decided that the remainder of the original scheme, including the reconnaissance of the principal lines of advance, should be modified and concluded by next 1st December, by which date the work should be finished, so far as the more important positions are concerned. This decision was reached after full consideration, and I am not prepared to recede from it.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state how long it would take the staff hitherto employed upon the tactical survey of the United Kingdom to complete the work of surveying the probable lines of advance from the likely landing-places along the coast line, and of the defensive positions commanding those lines of advance; and what total sum of money would be required for this purpose, excluding the regimental pay of the officers and men employed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am afraid that it is not practicable to give an accurate estimate of the time and money required for the completion of the original scheme.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state under what votes and sub-heads in the Army Estimates for 1906–7 is the provision for the expenses of the tactical survey of the United Kingdom to be found.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The provision for the expense of this tactical reconnaissance has been taken under Vote 1, Sub-head C, Vote 6, Sub-head E, and Vote 13, Sub-head A.

Examination for the Consular Service.

Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston): To ask the Secretary for State for Foreign Affairs, whether nominations for the next examination for appointments in the General Consular Service will be limited to candidates actually engaged in business; or, if nominations will not be so limited, whether such candidates will be given an advantage in the conditions of the examination when placed in competition with those who have had their time free, as recommended in the Report, dated July 1903, of the Committee appointed to inquire into the constitution of the Consular Service.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) At the next examination for the general consular service, a proportion of the vacancies will be reserved for competition amongst candidates who have had actual commercial experience

Import Duties on Cotton and Woollen Goods Entering Cape Colony, Natal and the Transvaal.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, what are the import duties in Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal on cotton goods and woollen goods, including Kaffir blankets.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The item of the Customs Union Convention which appears to cover the Question of the hon. Member, runs as follows :—37. Blankets and sheets or rugs, cotton or woollen, or manufactures of cotton and wool, commonly used as cotton or woollen blankets or rugs, the single article, in pairs or in the piece; and coats, jackets, or other apparel made of blanketing or baize, per £100, £25. Other cotton or woollen goods would come under the general 10 per cent. ad valorem rate.

Action of Mr. J. M. Sarbah at the Office of the Gold Coast Aborigines Newspaper.

Mr. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Mr. J. M. Sarbah, an unofficial member of the Legislative Council of the Colony, accompanied by a servant, trespassed on premises in the occupation of the Gold Coast Aborgines newspaper, and did damage to the printing press thereon; and whether he proposes to make any representations to the Government of the Colony on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has received no information with regard to this matter.

Martial Law in Natal—Exclusion of Undesirables.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the same power of excluding undesirables during martial law can be exercised in Natal as was used during the War in the Transvaal; if so, does this power reside in the Imperial Government or in the local authorities; does the same right of press and telegraphic censorship exist in Natal during martial law as was the case in the Transvaal, and in whom does its exercise rest; and can the names of recent transmittors of press messages be ascertained, or a description of their status or character be given.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) 1. Such a power is undoubtedly exercisable during martial law; but the Secretary of State has no reason for supposing that it is being exercised at present in Natal. 2. The power resides with the local authorities. 3. The right exists under martial law for this as for any other arbitrary proceeding, but the Secretary of State understands that it is not being actually exercised. 4. The Secretary of State is not able to give this information.

Names and Places of Birth of Civil Service Commission Examiners, etc.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can give the names and places of birth (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment) of all examiners, assistant examiners, and occasional examiners, and assistant examiners, if any, at present employed by the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names, places of birth, and education (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), and special qualifications of all technical officers nominated, appointed, and at present employed by the Board of Public Works, Ireland.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can give the names, places of birth, and education (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), and length of service of all officers in the Board of Public Works, Ireland, in receipt of salaries of not less than £500 a year.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) For a reply to these three Questions I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer which was given to him last Thursday.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1522.

Overtime Pay of Assistant Clerks.

MR. S. COLLINGS (Lambeth, Kennington): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, whilst second division clerks on entry into the Civil Service with a salary of £70 per annum are paid for overtime at the rate of 1s. 6d. per hour, assistant clerks (new class), who are in receipt of salaries varying between £85 and £100 per annum and who have served between nine and twelve years, receive only 10d. per hour for overtime; that under the present regulations an assistant clerk when he arrives at his maximum salary will be receiving a much lower rate of overtime pay than does the new entrant to the second division, although the latter would be in receipt of less than half the salary of such an assistant clerk; and whether he will consider the advisability of paying the overtime of the assistant clerks (new class) at one and a quarter times the rate awarded for ordinary work as was laid down by the Tweedmouth Commission of 1896 with respect to postal servants, and acted upon by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The overtime rate of 1s. 6d. an hour is applicable to all second division clerks with salaries between £70 and £190, and was fixed at a time when there was only one rate for the whole of that division. It is no doubt excessive in the case of clerks drawing salaries at the lower end of the scale, and ought in strictness to be reduced. I am not, however, prepared to level up the overtime rate of the assistant clerks.

Parochial Rates in Scotland.

MR. CLELAND (Glasgow, Bridgton): To ask the Secretary for Scotland, if, pending the introduction of a Bill dealing with local taxation in Scotland, resulting from the Report of His Majesty's Commission published in 1902, he will introduce this session a short Bill repealing the provisions of the 37th section of The Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845 (8 and 9 Vic., c. 83), so that parochial rates, like other assessments, may be levied on the annual value appearing in the valuation roll, without the deductions required by that Act, such repeal having been recommended by the Royal Commission and repeatedly urged upon the Government by parish councils, as, owing to the present state of the law, confusion is caused both to ratepayers and local authorities, and expense in litigation is hereby caused.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) No, Sir. I regret that I cannot at present give any such undertaking.

Hour of Closing of Donegal Square Post Office, South Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the post office at Donegal Square, South Belfast, closes every evening at six o'clock; and whether, in view of the fact that this is the only office in Belfast that closes so early, and the inconvenience caused to business people in the locality, he will make inquiries, with the view of keeping this office open till the same hour as other sub-post offices.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) No complaint has been received in regard to the office in question. The district is not a residential one, but chiefly consists of warehouses, and specially those of the linen trade. The warehouses do not open before nine and are closed at six p.m.

Promotion of Post Office Adult Night Messengers.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in the event of an adult night messenger receiving an established appointment, his service as messenger will be recognised towards stripes and increments.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Adult night messengers are not included in the classes to whom good conduct stripes are awarded. Unestablished service does not count towards stripes or towards increments.

Postal Delay at Lahardane.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience and expense suffered by Mr. Thomas Moran, of Linenhall Street, Castlebar, county Mayo, owing to the delay in the delivery of a postcard to a man in his employment who resides at Lahardane postal district, near Castlebar: whether he is aware that, on Sunday 7th January, Mr. Moran posted a card in Castlebar, and it was not delivered at Lahardane until Tuesday, 9th January, and that Mr. Moran posted a card on 14th March to the same man and it was not delivered until 16th March; and could he give the cause of the delay in both cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) My attention had not previously been drawn to the matter; but I have now called for a Report, and on its receipt I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Pay of John Condon. Postal Messenger of Ballyhahill.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that John Condon, a postal messenger at Ballyhahill post office, in the county of Limerick, does an average of six miles every day, and that his hours of duty are from 8.30 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.; that his wage is 4s. 6d. per week; and, in view of the fact that he cannot find other work to do in the interval owing to the hours he has to spend in the service, whether he will consider the advisability of increasing his wage to enable him to live.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have inquiry made on this subject and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result.

Allowance of Head Messenger at General Post Office.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the head messenger in the Secretary's Office at the General Post-Office was appointed by the then Postmaster-General (the Duke of Norfolk) with an allowance of 4s. per week, in addition to his wages, and that the allowance was withheld from October, 1900 to October, 1905; and whether he will consider the advisability of making these arrears good.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have already had this case under my consideration. The allowance of 4s. a week is being granted, but unfortunately the allowance cannot be made retrospective.

Pay of Adult Night Messenger in Scotch Post Offices.

MR. WALLACE (Perth): To ask the Postmaster-General will the conditions of employment and rates of pay of the adult night messengers, particularly in the provincial towns in Scotland, be considered by the Select Committee, and evidence on their behalf be laid before that Committee.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As I informed the hon. Member for the College Green division of Dublin on the 28th ultimo,† it is for the Select Committee to decide whether they consider that this class should be included in their inquiries.

Broken Axles on the Metropolitan District Railway.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the President of the Board of Trade in how many cases on the Metropolitan District Railway have the axles of vehicles in use on trains for the conveyance of passengers broken since the commencement of electric traction power; have any inquiries been held into the cause of the failure of such axles; and can he say what is the cause of the breakages.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Eight cases have been reported to the Board of Trade of broken axles of vehicles running on electrically-worked trains on the railway in question. As stated in a reply given to the hon. Member for Fulham yesterday, an inspecting officer of railways has been appointed to hold an inquiry in this matter, and when his Report is ready for issue I will forward a copy to my hon. friend.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1509.

Continental Shipping Rates.

MR. E. H. LAMB (Rochester): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will cause inquiries to be made of the Conference Shipping Lines in this country, with regard to the rates quoted by the Continental Shipping Lines, which are in the Conference, as to the freights charged on cement to ports in Cape Colony; whether he is aware, that, up to the end of July last, the rates from England and the Continent, by all the lines in the Conference to ports in Cape Colony, were on the same level, but that on the 1st August, 1905, the Conference raised the rates on this side by 2s. 6d. per ton, which is equivalent to about 5½d. per cask, although the Continental shipping lines, whilst being in the Conference, refused to raise their rates; and whether he will point out to the Conference lines on this side how they are hampering our export trade in cement by not reducing their freights to the level of the Continental rates, and thus endeavour to secure such reduction.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Yes, Sir. I will make the inquiries of the Conference Lines as suggested by my hon. friend.

Betting Prosecutions in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the difficulty experienced by the justices in Ireland in dealing with persons arrested in betting or gaming houses, the Acts of 1845, 1853, and 1854 providing penalties only for the keeper of the house and his assistants; and if he will call the attention of the authorities to the 33 Henry VIII, Cap. 9, Section 9, as being applicable to the offence.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Statute of Henry VIII. referred to does not, in my opinion, extend to Ireland, having been passed between the date of Poyning's Law, 10 Henry VII, and the Legislative Union.

Irish Local Authorities Return.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will grant the Return relating to local authorities standing on to-day's Notice Paper.†

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am not able, at present, to answer this Question. The notice for the Return only appeared in the Notice Paper this morning, and the matter is one which needs consideration.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Department will consider the advisability of issuing a circular letter to clerks to justices informing them whether, in the opinion of the Department, an applicant for a certificate of exemption, who satisfies two justices in petty sessions that he has a conscientious objection, so as to entitle him to such certificate, can be refused it on the ground that the majority of the justices present are not so satisfied.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am advised that where a majority of the justices sitting in petty sessions are not in favour of granting a certificate of exemption from vaccination it would not be proper for any minority to grant the certificate unless the other justices present abstained from adjudicating in the case. The point is not one that I can decide, and I am not prepared to issue a circular on the subject.

Police Pensions.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a statement prepared by the Association of Municipal Corporations, showing the increased burden thrown upon police authorities outside the Metropolis, in consequence of the increase in the number of pensioners chargeable to the pension funds created under The Police Act, 1890; and whether he will take into consideration the desirability of increasing the present annual grant of £150,000 fixed by Parliament in the year 1890 to an amount which will bear the same proportion to the total payments out of the pension funds as the amount granted bore to those payments in the year 1892.

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† The notice referred to asked for a Return relating to the Cash Balances and Reserves of Local Authorities, giving the following particulars:—Names of local authorities; number at 31st March, 1906; net cash balances in hand at 31st March, 1906; overdrawn cash balances (if any) at 31st March, 1906; reserve funds (of country banks) at 31st March, 1906; percentage of net cash balances in hand at 31st March, 1906, to Reserve Funds (column 5) (for authorities outside the area of the county of London); reserve funds (of London banks, including the Bank of England) at 31st March, 1906; percentage of net cash balances in hand at 31st March, 1906, to Reserve Funds (column 7) (for authorities in the county of London); totals at 31st March, 1906, of net cash balances in hand, of overdrawn cash balances (if any), and of Reserve Funds; and stating the Reserve Funds of the several banking institutions at the 31st day of March, 1906, or at the nearest date to the 31st day of March when their several accounts were made up to.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have received the statement, and will give it my best consideration, but the question forms part of the far larger question of the incidence of local taxation, and I can hold out no hope of its being treated separately. I may perhaps add that when the present grant was fixed, in 1890, it was fully understood that a large and rapid increase of the pension charge was to be expected, and it was with that increase in view that the grant was settled.

Revenue derived on Import Duty on Preserved Fruits.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what has been the revenue derived during the last financial year from the import duty on fruits preserved in syrup, and the estimated cost of collecting the same; and whether he will consider the advisability of abolishing this tax upon this article of food.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The revenue from the duty on fruits preserved in syrup collected during the calendar year, 1905 (the figures for the financial year 1905–6 are not yet available), was as follows:—

Fruit, including fruit pulp, not liable to duty as such, preserved in syrup - - -	£19,125
Fruit, liable to duty as such, except currants, preserved in sugar or syrup - - -	3,612
	£22,737

No estimate can be framed of the cost of collecting the duties on these fruits as distinct from other heads of revenue. The cost of collection of the Customs revenue as a whole is about £2 10s. per cent. The repeal of these duties could only be considered in connection with the question of the repeal of the fruit and sugar duties of which they form a part.

Flooding of Lough Neagh and River Bann.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the desirability of devoting a portion of any surplus he may have to deal with when he introduces his Budget statement in carrying out the recommendations of Sir Alexander Binnie as to relieving the flooding caused by the overflowing of Lough Neagh and the river Bann.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I am unable to consider the suggestion that a special grant from the Exchequer should be made for this purpose. The service is one which must be provided for, if at all, out of the Ireland Development Grant.

Salaries of Chaplains of Lawrence Asylum.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Secretary of State for India what salary and emoluments do the Catholic and Protestant chaplains respectively receive from Government for their services in connection with the Lawrence Asylums; whether the Catholic chaplain resides on the premises; and, if not, how far is his residence from the asylum, and what carriage allowance is given in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have not in my possession such information about the management of the Lawrence Asylums as would enable me to answer the hon. Member's Question, but I will refer it to the Government of India.

Pensions for Irish Board of Works Officials.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Port and Docks Board of Dublin and the Corporation grant pensions to their worn-out employed, he will arrange a similar method, instead of a compensation allowance, to the worn-out employees of the Board of Works.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am not aware what the pension schemes of the local bodies referred to may be, but I am not prepared to make the alteration proposed, which could not be done without affecting several other public departments and involving heavy expenditure.

Dredging of Kingstown Harbour.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many days in the year the dredger works in Kingstown Harbour; whether he is aware that the dredger has been removed from the west pier to Carlisle Pier, and what is the reason; and whether he is aware that a ship which came for coal recently went aground at the Victoria Wharf owing to the want of dredging; and whether he will arrange that the necessary amount of dredging work will be done in future.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) There is no fixed number of days to be worked in the year. The number depends partly on the weather and partly on the programme of work for the year. The moorings at which the dredger lies when not working have been changed to a more convenient part of the harbour. The change has no reference to or effect on her programme of work. The reference in the latter part of the Question appears to be to a steamer which went aground in the harbour (not at the Victoria Wharf) through not having a pilot on board. She drew twenty-one feet of water and the point at which she grounded is marked on the chart as having a depth of sixteen feet at low water.

New Year's Day as Public Holiday.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether New Year's Day has been struck off the list of holidays for the employees of the Board of Works in Kingstown; and, if so, whether facilities will be allowed to the men to attend mass on the holidays of obligation in future, and during the time of a retreat, without stoppage of pay.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) St. Patrick's Day has been substituted for New Year's Day as a holiday at Kingstown Harbour Works. It is understood that the men can attend to their religious duties during the breakfast hour. In other cases, although considerable inconvenience arises from alterations of settled hours of work, the Board in 1905 instructed the superintendent in the case of men presenting themselves at 7 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. to record them as absent with leave, subject to a deduction of pay for one hour. I am informed that this goes beyond the practice of private employers, who give no special facilities.

Dublin Box Contract.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the contract for the supply of boxes, hitherto given to the Bookbinders and Machine Rulers Consolidated Union, Dublin, has been taken away and granted to another firm.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Formerly there was no contract for the supply of these boxes. When it was determined to resort to contract, tenders were invited in the usual way, and the contract was placed with the firm that offered the most favourable terms.

Tenants of Labourers' Cottages as District Councillors.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether a tenant of a labourer's cottage to the district council, under the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, can become a district councillor of the union to which the cottage is situate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Local Government Board that, according to a decision of the King's Bench Division in 1901, no legal disqualification for the office of councillor attaches to a person by reason of his being a tenant of a labourer's cottage.

Teaching of Irish in Irish Schools.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a great part of the teaching of Irish as an extra subject in the national schools is performed by extern teachers whose sole occupation is the teaching of Irish, and who, to qualify themselves for this work, have attended the Munster and Connaught Gaelic Training Colleges, where instruction is given in the most modern methods of language teaching; and whether, in dealing with the question of Irish in the national schools, he will see that nothing is done which will deprive the schools of the services of these specially trained expert teachers.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that, in the year 1905, Irish was taught in 2,408 national schools, but in 209 cases only was the teaching performed by extern teachers. The commissioners are not aware whether the teaching of Irish is the sole occupation of these teachers, but most of them hold certificates from the commissioners, obtained at the July examinations. The present system will remain in operation until the 30th June next, and matters have not yet reached a stage at which I can make a definite statement as to what change may then be made.

Irish Commissioners for Fixing Fair Rents.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether legal and lay Sub-commissioners have been appointed for the purpose of fixing fair rents in connection with the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, 1881 and 1887; if so, what are their names and qualifications, and the counties to which they belong; whether they have been appointed in substitution for Sub-commissioners whose tenure of office has expired; and, if so, whether he will state the names of the latter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have fully dealt with this matter in the reply which I gave to-day to a Question put by the hon. Member for Mid Armagh.† Of the temporary assistant land commissioners whose terms of office had expired, two legal and twenty-one lay commissioners have been reappointed. Their names were published in the *Dublin Gazette* of the 3rd inst. Five temporary lay assistant commissioners have not been reappointed, namely, Messrs. J. Clarke, L. Croasdaile, R. Donovan, T. L. Esmonde, and P. H. Grierson. Five gentlemen have been newly appointed as lay assistant commissioners, namely, Messrs. Mathew Flanagan, J.P., farmer, county Roscommon; John Gill, J.P., farmer, and member of agricultural committee, county Down; Jeremiah J. Howard, J.P., farmer and land valuer, county Cork; Patrick Lafferty, J.P., farmer, county Down; and Thomas Linehan, farmer, county Cork.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will see that, in the enforcement of Rule 127b in Irish national schools taught by two or more teachers, the vested interests of such teachers are safeguarded by recommending that the future promotions and increments of principals, and the retention and emoluments of assistants, is based on the average in attendance for the year 1905, or the mean of the averages for the last three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that, in the case of national schools taught by two or more teachers, Rule 127b is not enforced if the probable effect of the rule would be the loss of an assistant to the school. So long as the rule is not applied all the existing interests of the teachers are, of course, secure. When there is no danger of the loss of an assistant by the application of Rule 127b the vested interests of the principal, in whatever grade salary he is receiving, are also secure. In one case alone, viz., the case of a principal who is a candidate for the first division of the first grade, the application of Rule 127b may imperil the teacher's chances of promotion to that grade. In such case, also, the residual capitation grant accruing to both principal and assistant may be somewhat decreased, but the teacher of the school to which pupils under seven are transferred, under the operation of Rule 127b, will benefit in a corresponding degree. The Commissioners do not think it necessary to introduce any additional safeguards in connection with Rule 127b, and they cannot consent to the proposal to base future promotions and increments of principals, and the retention of emoluments of assistants on the average attendance of pupils for the year 1905, or on the mean of the averages for the last three years.

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† See Column 745.

Pay of Labourers at Enfield and Waltham Abbey Factories.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the increase in wages from 21s. to 23s. weekly to labourers in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, may be taken to include all such men in the ordnance factories, including Waltham Abbey and Enfield Lock.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The increase applies to all labourers in the employ of the War Department at Woolwich, both in the Royal Arsenal and the ordnance factories, but does not include those at Waltham Abbey and Enfield Lock.

Irish Firms and Army Contracts.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether there is a receiving depot at Island Bridge Barracks or at Mountpellier Hill, Dublin, where supplies for the Army are largely stored; whether, if so, arrangements will be made to enable Irish contractors to have their goods inspected and delivered in Dublin instead of sending them to Woolwich; and whether he is aware that the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland stated to a deputation from the Parliamentary Committee of the Irish Trades Congress that he considered this a reasonable request.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) There is an ordnance depot at Island Bridge Barracks where stores for the Army are stored. It is proposed to initiate tentatively a system of local inspection for such stores as it is considered can be advantageously obtained and passed into the service at Island Bridge, and the necessary buildings for this purpose will be commenced in the present financial year. I have no knowledge as to the statement in the third part of the Question.

Voting of Absent Electors.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that this House, upon 8th March, 1904, unanimously resolved that means should be afforded to fishermen, seamen, railway servants, and others to record their votes at Parliamentary elections, when by reason of their calling they will be absent on duty on the day of the poll, whether the Government will, in their Plural Voting Bill, or on other suitable occasion, endeavour to give effect to this Resolution.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) This is not a matter which can be dealt with in the Plural Voting Bill; but it is one which deserves favourable consideration in a further measure dealing with registration and qualification.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Wei-hai-Wei Chinese Regiment.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the decision to disband the Chinese Regiment at Wei-hai-Wei, he will ascertain whether employment as police at Singapore and other Colonies, where Chinese form a large portion of the population, could be found for some of these men trained at public expense.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I am advised that there is no likelihood of being able to employ the disbanded men of the Chinese Regiment in the manner suggested.

Northern Nigeria.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps, if any, are being taken to open up the Munshi country, in Northern Nigeria, to trade; and what steps are being taken to bring to justice the natives who, last January, sacked the Niger Company's station at Abinsi; and whether Papers will be laid upon the Table.

Mr. CHURCHILL: With regard to the earlier part of the hon. Member's Question, I have to refer him to the Answer which I gave yesterday to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid. Armagh.† The correspondence is not yet complete, as the Secretary of State has asked Sir F. Lugard for certain further information as to the origin of the disturbance; when this is received, Papers shall be laid.

Premier Diamond Mine—Kaffir Compound.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Kaffirs working on the Premier Diamond Mine are strictly confined to compounds, and, if so, whether this is the only mine in the Transvaal where the compound system is enforced; whether, in view of the declaration of Ministers relating to the compound system in South Africa, and that the Transvaal Government hold six-tenths of the claims, and are entitled to 60 per cent. of the profits of this mine, he will instruct Lord Selborne to abolish the compound system, and work the mine for the future entirely with white labour; whether he is aware that the chairman of this company, at the annual meeting held in Johannesburg on February 27th, 1906, stated the working costs per load were 3s. 9d. and the profit 10s. per load, and that the net profit for the mine for the year 1905 was £622,633, and that additional profit was anticipated when the new washing plant was completed in June next; and whether he will instruct Lord Selborne to obtain from the State mining engineer a Report of what diminution of profit, if any, would be lost to the Government if the mine was worked entirely with white labour.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Kaffirs working on the Premier Mine are, I understand, confined to compounds under the Ordinance of 1903, which enacts *inter alia* that no coloured person shall be kept in any compound except under a contract voluntarily entered into by him and not running for a period exceeding three months at a time. I am not aware whether this system exists on the other diamond mines. The Secretary of State is not prepared to give the instructions suggested. I have not received any official report on the financial working of the Premier Mine, but I have seen the report in the local Press of the annual meeting. The Secretary of State will ask Lord Selborne to obtain from the mining engineer the report which the hon. Member desires.

Illegal Flogging of Coolies.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in how many cases Chinese coolies who have been illegally flogged in the Transvaal were subsequently informed by the Superintendent of Foreign Labour, or by the inspectors, that they had a right to recover damages for assault.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am not able to say, but the Secretary of State will make inquiry.

South African Committee.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it will be within the instructions of the Committee about to proceed to South Africa to inquire what would be the effect produced in the composition of the representative assemblies of the new Colonies by the substitution for single-member districts of larger districts returning three, five, or more members, with provisions for securing the representation of the diversities of parties within each enlarged constituency; how far such substitution would affect the importance of the issue which has been raised between distribution of seats according to population, and according to voters; whether the Committee will have power to ascertain how far such substitution would be acceptable to the several political parties in the Colonies, or would tend to diminish the animosities between them, or would allay the anxieties of those classes of residents who are afraid they may get no representation in the new assemblies; and whether, for the purpose of facilitating the execution of their duties, the Committee will be furnished with the latest information as to the operation of the different methods of electing representative assemblies which have been tried and are in practice in European countries, the United States of America, and our own Colonies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 497.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The terms of reference have been so drawn as to allow the Committee to include the matters raised in the hon. Member's Question within the scope of their inquiry. It will be within the discretion of the Committee to furnish itself with all such available information as it finds it necessary to obtain for the discharge of the duty imposed upon it.

The Kaffir Troubles.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on what specific charge warrants were issued to the police for the arrest of the natives at Byrnetown, Natal, whose attempted rescue led to the recent affray.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The warrants of arrest of these natives were, the Secretary of State is informed, issued for being armed in breach of the law.

Penalties on Natives.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many cattle and how much land have been taken from native tribes in Natal, in fines or otherwise, during the period of martial law; how the cattle and the lands taken have been disposed of; and what has become, or is likely to become, of the natives who were living on the land which has been taken away.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State is not yet informed as to the total number of cattle and the exact amount of land taken from the natives. He has not learned the manner in which the cattle have been disposed of. As regards the land of Gobizembe and his tribe, I would refer to the Answer I gave to a written Question on 29th March.† The natives residing on the land will not necessarily, I understand, be removed in consequence of the deposition of Gobizembe. Those who are removed will be in the position of other natives not living in locations, who are the majority of the native population. There are about 250,000 natives living in locations and mission reserves, and over 400,000 natives living on private farms, where they pay rent from £1 upwards.

Flogging by Sentence of Court-Martial.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many men have been flogged by sentence of court-martial, or otherwise by sentence of magistrates, during the period of martial law in Natal.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State is not yet in possession of this information.

Ceylon Pearl Fisheries.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state who were the persons with whom Mr. Lyttelton negotiated the lease of the Ceylon pearl fisheries to a syndicate for twenty years; and whether the intention to lease these fisheries was notified in either the London or the Colonial *Gazettes*, or otherwise, so that tenders might be made by capitalists in general.

MR. CHURCHILL: In answer to the first part of the Question, the matter was first brought to Mr. Lyttelton's notice by Sir West Ridgeway. Subsequent negotiations both in this country and in Ceylon were with representatives of Messrs. Derenburg and Company, and Sir West Ridgeway only joined the syndicate at a later stage. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

MR. COWAN: Who are the members of the syndicate?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot say, but if my hon. friend will put down a Question, I will inquire.

The Natal Executions.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I wish to ask if it is true that at the execution on Monday of twelve Kaffirs the natives of the surrounding districts were compelled to come in and witness———

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1247–8.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But there may be more of these murderous scenes.

India—Education of Deceased Warrant Officers' Children.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a regulation has lately been made by the Indian Government, whereby the children of a school-going age of deceased warrant officers, in destitute circumstances, are compelled to seek admission to a Lawrence asylum in order to draw the maintenance grant, even though they belong to the Catholic Church; if so, for what reason has the sanction for maintenance grant for such children been withheld from Catholic institutions which, until such regulation was made, had been permitted to entertain such children and to receive the maintenance grant from the military authorities for their support.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I have no information regarding the withdrawal of a maintenance grant for children at Catholic institutions. I will address an inquiry to the Government of India.

Slavery in Morocco.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British delegate at Algeciras was able to bring the question of slavery in Morocco before the Conference; and, if so, can he state the decision arrived at.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): At the suggestion of the British delegate, the Conference resolved to make a communication to the Sultan, expressing the earnest hope that His Majesty would take into consideration the question of slavery in his Empire, and would adopt such measures as he might deem suitable with the view to limit and gradually abolish the system of slavery, and especially with a view to prohibit the public sale of slaves in the towns of his Empire.

Governorship of Harrar.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state who has been appointed to succeed Ras Makunan as Governor of Harrar.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government have as yet received no information as to the appointment of a successor to Ras Makunan.

Tabah.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now give any information as to the negotiations with the Sublime Porte with reference to Tabah.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am unable to add anything to the reply given to the hon. Member on March 28th.† The negotiations are still proceeding.

Macedonian Gendarmerie.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any answer has been received from the Porte to the Note delivered on 5th March, containing proposals for the increase of the powers of the *Gendarmerie* in Macedonia; and whether, in the event of an unsatisfactory reply, His Majesty's Government will take steps to secure their acceptance.

SIR EDWARD GREY: No answer has yet been received. In case it should be unsatisfactory, His Majesty's Goverment will consider, in consultation with the other Powers, what steps can be taken.

British Consular Courts in China.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether offences committed by Chinese against British subjects in the British concessions of Hankow and certain other British concessions in China are tried in the British consular courts presided over by a Chinese magistrate, sitting with a British consular officer as assessor; whether the Chinese prisoners tried before these courts are dealt with according to Chinese law, the punishments including flogging with bamboos and torturing with the cangue, being sanctioned by the assessor before the prisoners are handed over to the Chinese authorities for the infliction of the sentences imposed.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1261.

Sir EDWARD GREY: These cases are not tried in British consular courts.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the cangue with which, according to the report of the superintendent of police of Hankow, seventy-six persons were punished by the magistrate sitting in the British consular court at Hankow during 1905, is a square wooden collar from twenty pounds to sixty pounds in weight, and measuring three or four feet across, with a round hole for the neck, rendering the convict unable to reach his mouth or defend himself from insects; whether the British consular agent sat with the Chinese magistrate as assessor in the court when the sentences of the cangue were imposed; and whether he sanctioned those sentences.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I have nothing to add to previous Answers. These sentences are not given in the consular court, but in the Chinese court, by a Chinese magistrate, who is not under British authority.

Mr. H. H. MARKS: Arising out of that Question, may I ask whether it is not the fact that under the agreement between the Government of China and the British Government, made at Chifu in 1876, specific authority was given to the assessor sitting in these courts to take exception to these proceedings or the details of the proceedings?

Sir EDWARD GREY: The duty of the assessor is to see that the trial is properly conducted. He cannot control the court or the sentences. As a matter of fact, there was the other day at Shanghai a case in which the assessor did interfere beyond what had been the usual practice, and the Chinese magistrate thereupon closed the court, and there were riots in which several persons were killed and injured. It would be most unsuitable at the present time to try to infringe on what has been the established Chinese usage.

Mr. H. H. MARKS: Is it not in the power of the Government under the right hon. Gentleman's direction to give instructions to our Consuls not to assent to these sentences, which are against British sentiment and practice?

***Mr. LEHMANN** (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that these punishments are the same as those inflicted on Chinese coolies in Africa?

Sir EDWARD GREY: These punishments are inflicted under Chinese authority. If the hon. Member opposite can bring me any evidence that the British authorities are responsible for these sentences being inflicted, I will, of course, inquire into the matter. I have made inquiry of the Government at Peking, and I have been informed that these sentences are inflicted by Chinese magistrates.

Mr. H. H. MARKS: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of giving instructions to the British consular agents sitting as assessors in these courts not to give their assent to these sentences?

Sir EDWARD GREY: The sentences are inflicted whether they assent or not. I cannot give instructions to interfere with the Chinese magistrates.

Mr. H. H. MARKS gave notice that he would call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

Mr. ASHLEY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that these Chinamen are taken into custody by British police?

Sir EDWARD GREY: They are taken into custody by the municipal police—the police of the municipality of the British community—but there is no power to have them tried except by Chinese magistrates acting under the Chinese law. I would suggest that before these Questions are repeated hon. Members should get some evidence that it is in the power of the British community to alter the law or the sentences, because to repeat these Questions without making such inquiry is to reflect unjustly on the British communities in these foreign settlements.

Congo Government—Rev. Mr. Stannard's Case.

Mr. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs if His Majesty's Government proposes to be represented at the trial of the action for libel which an officer of the Congo Government is taking against the Rev. Mr. Stannard; and whether the Government intends to instruct any representative who may attend the trial on its behalf to furnish a full report of what takes place to the Government.

Sir EDWARD GREY: Vice-Consul Armstrong has been instructed to attend the hearing of the case, to watch the proceedings carefully, and to report anything in connection with the trial which should, in his opinion, be brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government. We have also telegraphed to inquire whether Mr. Stannard has been arrested, but have not yet had a reply.

Income-Tax.

Mr. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Income-Tax Commissioners, and to the fact that British investments in foreign industrial enterprises have more than doubled during the last ten years; and whether, in his approaching Budget, he can see his way to submit proposals whereby the income-tax shall be so graduated that the profits upon such investments may be made to pay income-tax upon a higher scale than will be charged upon the profits of similar investments in this country.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): I have not been able to trace the source of the hon. Member's information, and I cannot say whether it is, or is not, correct. In either case, I see no sufficient reason for differentiating for income-tax purposes in regard to persons residing in the United Kingdom between incomes earned in this country and incomes earned abroad.

Mr. DAVID MACIVER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that foreign investors in this country when domiciled abroad are exempted from income-tax, and that foreign manufacturing concerns whose wares are imported free of duty in competition with those of our manufacturers are exempted from income-tax upon their own profits made in this country, and pay only in respect of the remuneration of their resident representatives, he will, in his approaching Budget, submit proposals for the removal of these exemptions.

Mr. ASQUITH: Foreigners resident abroad are not exempt from income-tax upon income derived from money invested in the United Kingdom, unless their total income from such investments is less than £160 per annum, nor are foreigners carrying on trade in the United Kingdom exempt from income-tax on the profits from such trade. It would not, in my opinion, be practicable to extend the scope of the tax in the manner suggested.

Mr. MACIVER asked whether it was not the case that foreign holders of British railway stocks did not pay, and that foreign manufacturers carrying on business with this country paid only on their manager's salary.

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir. That has been very carefully investigated.

Mr. MACIVER: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman is wrong.

Sir WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the forthcoming Budget, he will take into consideration the case of married persons with small incomes, with a view to affording them greater relief from income-tax by extending the limit on which exemption or abatement would be granted.

Mr. ASQUITH: I cannot make any statement in anticipation of the Budget.

Mr. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, when he is in a position to remit a portion of the income-tax, he will consider the claims of persons residing in this country who derive their incomes from trade and industry in British Colonies and Dependencies; and whether he will grant a substantial rebate on all such incomes which have already been mulcted in income-tax in the country of origin.

Mr. ASQUITH: I will certainly consider the claims of any class of taxpayers who can make out a case for special relief, if and when I am in a position to remit a portion of the income-tax. But I am, as at present advised, by no means certain that the incidence of the tax is unfair to the particular class of investors to which the Question refers.

Fiscal Questions.

MR. DAVID MACIVER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been called to the increasing burden of local and other taxation now borne by the food-producing and manufacturing industries of this country; and whether, in his approaching Budget, he can see his way to submit proposals whereby foreign importations of competing productions which at present escape taxation in this country shall be made to contribute in like proportion to the revenue.

MR. ASQUITH: I am aware that the burden both of local and of general taxation has greatly increased of recent years, but what effect this increase may have had upon the cost of production of commodities is too complicated and controversial a topic to discuss within the limits of a reply to a Question. As regards the second part of the Question, I cannot make any statement in anticipation of the Budget.

Examinations for Factory Inspectorships.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the inconvenience caused to intending candidates by the present uncertainty regarding qualifying examinations for factory inspectorships, he will state when and under what syllabus the next examination will be held; and whether he proposes to fill any of the impending vacancies in the staff of inspectors with assistants, for whom special examination papers will be set.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The next examination for factory inspectorships will be held under the new scheme and will take place probably early in the month of June. I do not think that any inconvenience or uncertainty can have been caused with regard to the syllabus, because as soon as the new scheme of examination had been settled copies of the new syllabus were at once issued to all the candidates whose qualifications gave them any prospect of receiving a nomination. A note was attached to each of these copies stating that this new syllabus was to be substituted for that hitherto in use. These candidates were also invited to furnish any further particulars as to their qualifications which they might desire to make known, and a fresh form of application was enclosed for the purpose. The proposals made by the hon. Member in the last part of his Question shall have my careful consideration.

Prison Officials—Rights of Combination.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can now say what he proposes to do in regard to Standing Order No. 727 of His Majesty's Prison Regulations, and what rights of combination, if any, he is prepared to grant to prison officers.

MR. GLADSTONE: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer at the same time the Questions put to me on March 15th by the hon. Members for Stockport and for East St. Pancras.† I have decided to cancel Standing Order 727 and to replace it by a new order which will allow prison officers, with the sanction of the Governor or of the Prison Commissioners, or on appeal of the Secretary of State, to meet and discuss among themselves questions relating to their duties and position in the prison service. I have modified certain others of the Standing Orders in the same connection.

Flogging in English Prisons.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether flogging is permitted as a disciplinary measure in English prisons; and, if so, how many cases have taken place during the year 1905, and with whom rests the power of authorising this punishment.

MR. GLADSTONE: Corporal punishment is inflicted in English prisons under the restrictions imposed by Section 5 of the Prison Act, 1898, and the rules made thereunder, to which I beg to refer the hon. Member. An order for such punishment can only be made by a Visiting

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†See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1410 ("Prison Warders' Grievances.")

Committee or the Board of Visitors of a prison after an inquiry on oath, and cannot be carried out until it has been confirmed by the Secretary of State. The number of cases during the year 1905 was: in local prisons twenty-seven, in convict prisons sixteen, total forty-three.

Commutations of Death Sentences.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state in how many cases has the clemency of the Crown been exercised on his advice in regard to persons sentenced to death by the courts of the United Kingdom.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Answer is eleven.

Suppressed Public House Licences.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is in a position to make a statement as to the number of public-houses of which the licences have been discontinued under the Act of 1902.

MR. GLADSTONE: The figures are not yet quite complete; but I believe that about 500 licences will be found to have been extinguished for the year 1905 under the compensation provisions of the Licensing Act, 1904. The volume of Licensing Statistics, which I hope to publish very shortly, will show the operation of the Act during last year.

Aliens.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many aliens arrived in England in the last two weeks; how many of these were allowed to land; and how many were refused admission as undesirable.

MR. GLADSTONE: The statistics covering the first two sentences of the Question are not yet available: when they are I doubt whether it will be worth while to select a particular fortnight and show the figures separately. As regards refusals of leave to land, the figures have not yet been finally checked, but I believe that in the two weeks ending March 31st, nine aliens failed to obtain leave.

Burial of a Jew in a Christian Burial Ground.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the death of an Austrian Jew, named Nathan Cohen, who died in the Mill Road Infirmary at Liverpool, and was buried by the Poor Law authorities in a Christian burial ground; and whether, in view of the fact that the deceased was on his way to Austria from the United States, he can say why the custom of recognising the religious beliefs has been disregarded in this case.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. I understand that the deceased was admitted to the infirmary from the steam ship "Merion," that he was unable to give any information, but that the ship's steward who brought him to the relief office stated that he belonged to the Church of England. I am informed that one of the nurses who had been in Russia was able to converse a little with the patient, and that this led to a communication being sent to the Rabbi of the Hope Street Synagogue, Liverpool, but that no reply was received until a fortnight after the man's death. I am further informed that the body was kept in the mortuary for five days before interment, and that it was not until some days after the funeral that the minister of the Princes Road Synagogue called at the infirmary and stated that he had received a letter from the wife of the deceased and that the man was a Hebrew.

Audit of Local Funds.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has made, or will make, arrangements for the district auditors throughout England and Wales to count and certify the net cash balances in the hands of all treasurers and accounting officials whose accounts are subject to the District Auditors Act, 1879, and its applied provisions, on March 31st in each year, or upon such other date, if any, as the accounts are made up to and balanced.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am afraid that it would not be practicable to give effect to the arrangement suggested.

District Auditors.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of district auditors employed under the Board, and the number of districts assigned to each district auditor, distinguishing between the areas of the administrative county of London and the rest of England and Wales.

I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will furnish the names of the municipal corporations complete accounts of which are subject to audit by auditors appointed by the Local Government Board, the number of auditors assigned to the work thereof, with the names of their respective audit districts.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: The complete staff of district auditors and assistant auditors consists of fifty auditors and twenty assistants. The names of the municipal corporations, all the accounts of whom are now or will at the expiration of the present financial year be liable to audit by district auditors are Bournemouth Cheltenham, Merthyr Tydfil, Plymouth, Poole, Southend-on-Sea, Swindon and Tunbridge Wells. The particulars asked for as to the number of local authorities in the districts assigned to the auditors respectively, and as to the arrangements for the audit of the accounts of the corporations above mentioned would be too lengthy to be given in reply to Questions, but I shall be happy to send the hon. Member a statement on the subject if he desires it.

Motor-Car Commission Report.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the reason of the delay in the presentation of the Report of the Royal Commission on Motor-Cars.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: I am informed that the draft Report is in course of preparation.

Lascar Seamen on British Ships.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many Lascar seamen died on British ships in consequence of smallpox during the year 1905.

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Kearley, Devonport): The number of Lascars reported to have died from smallpox during the year 1905, in ships registered in the United Kingdom, is five.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many Chinese and Lascar seamen committed suicide on board British ships during 1905; and whether any medical inspection of Chinese and Lascar seamen takes place prior to their being engaged on board British ships.

*Mr. KEARLEY: The numbers of Lascars who were reported to have committed suicide, or were supposed to have committed suicide, or were missing during the year 1905, in ships registered in the United Kingdom, are as follows:—Suicide, seventeen; supposed suicide, twenty-six; missing, twenty-one. The Board of Trade have no information with regard to the medical inspection of Asiatic seamen at ports in the East. Facilities are provided in this country for such inspection under Section 203 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many Lascar seamen died in consequence of heart failure and apoplexy on British ships during the year 1905.

*Mr. KEARLEY: The number of Lascars reported to have died from affections of the heart and apoplexy during the year 1905, in ships registered in the United Kingdom, are as follows:—From heat apoplexy, ten; from diseases of the heart, fifty-two.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many Chinese and Lascar seamen died on board British ships during the year 1905 in consequence of beri-beri; and whether he is aware that this disease is largely due to insufficient feeding and bad accommodation.

*MR. KEARLEY: The number of Chinese and Lascar seamen reported to have died from beri-beri during the year 1905, in ships registered in the United Kingdom, is sixty. From a recent Report of a Committee of the Royal College of Physicians it appears that while the cause of beri-beri has not been definitely ascertained the best precautions against the disease are good food and good hygiene.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration, when the Shipping Bill is in Committee, the question of improving the food and accommodation for Lascars and of securing proper inspection.

*MR. KEARLEY: No doubt these things will be considered, but I cannot give a definite pledge.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many Asiastic seamen died on British ships during the year 1905 in consequence of bronchitis, asthma, pneumonia, and other chest diseases.

*MR. KEARLEY: The number of Asiatic seamen reported to have died from bronchitis, asthma, pneumonia, and other chest diseases during the year 1905, in ships registered in the United Kingdom, are as follows:—bronchitis, five; asthma, none; pleurisy, two; pneumonia, thirty-two; phthisis, thirty-two.

Seamen's Rations.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether there is any inspection now made of the weights and measures used on board British ships in connection with the provisions supplied to the crews.

*MR. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade have issued a special caution to owners and masters with regard to the inspection of weights and measures. The local authorities who appoint the inspectors of weights and measures are about to be communicated with on the subject.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that a similar order was sent out by the late President of the Board of Trade and that inspections have taken place up till now?

*MR. KEARLEY: I am not aware of that. The matter shall be inquired into.

The s.s. "Fenay Lodge"—Crew's Rations.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that on the last voyage of the British steamer "Feeny Lodge" it was stated in the articles of agreement that the crew were to receive a certain allowance of butter per week; whether he is aware that instead of the crew being supplied with butter they were supplied with margarine; whether he can state if there are any powers under the Merchant Shipping Bill which would allow of his taking proceedings against owners who supply ships' crews with margarine instead of butter; and whether he is aware that recently a shopkeeper at Aston was fined £50 and costs by the magistrates for selling as butter a mixture containing fifty per cent. of foreign fat.

MR. KEARLEY: I have ascertained that the facts as to the "Fenay Lodge" are as stated in the Question. If the articles of agreement stipulated butter and margarine was supplied it was a breach of contract and the men have their legal remedy. In the Merchant Shipping Bill now before Parliament butter is one of the articles comprising the statutory scale, and no substitute will be permitted. I have no information with regard to the case at Aston to which the hon. Member refers.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Will the Board of Trade consider the desirability of giving seamen the right to sue for breach of contract in these cases, and of imposing a penalty on any shipowner who supplies margarine instead of butter, in the same manner as a small shopkeeper is treated?

MR. KEARLEY: I think the Bill now before Parliament will safeguard seamen in that respect.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Is it not the fact that the margarine is often much better than the butter?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Would the hon. Gentleman, who is, I believe, a judge of butter, like to taste a sample of this abominable stuff which is supplied as butter?

Foreign Sailors on British Ships.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to a case tried at Ramsgate police court on March 30th, when two foreign sailors, serving on board a British ship, were charged with theft; whether he is aware that the case had been adjourned from a previous hearing in consequence of the two seamen not being able to speak or understand the English language, and that it was with difficulty an interpreter could be found who could understand the language spoken by the men; and whether he can state the name of the vessel and the port at which the two seamen in question were engaged and their rate of wages per month.

Mr. KEARLEY: The case to which the hon. Member refers is, I believe, that of the "Vivid," with regard to which I answered a Question put to me by the hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet yesterday. The seamen (whose names are Singi and Lood) were engaged at Sunderland at £2 10s. and £1 10s. per month respectively. They are natives of the Baltic provinces and spoke Esthonian. As no one available knew both English and Esthonian, two interpreters had to be made use of.

Register of Seamen.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will furnish a Return showing the form of the register of seamen stated to be kept by the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen, how each seaman's service is entered, and the cost of maintaining the register.

Mr. KEARLEY: The lists of crews delivered into the custody of the Registrar-General constitute the register which he is required to keep of all persons who serve in ships. The lists vary in form according to the employment of the vessel; but they contain the description and service of all seamen. The cost of maintaining the register is not separately assessed from the total cost of the work of the Registrar-General's staff.

General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that it is proposed to again remove the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen to old buildings at the Mint; that a sum of £8,000 has been placed on the Estimates as a preliminary expense for the purpose of altering the buildings; and whether, seeing that the office was removed to its present address at Westminster in 1903, and in view of the convenience of the present site to the Marine Department and of the fact that a branch of the office is established in the City, will he take steps to prevent the removal and the outlay contemplated.

*Mr. KEARLEY: The arrangements under which the Registrar-General of Seaman and his staff are at present located at the West End are merely temporary. The first suitable opportunity will be taken to remove the office back to the City, as the Merchant Shipping Act requires it to be in the Port of London. A sum of £8,000 has, as stated by the hon. Member, been placed on the Estimates.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: Will the hon. Member say whether there has been any request made by seamen for the removal of these offices, which were only recently put up at a cost of some thousands of pounds? Why are they to be shifted?

*Mr. KEARLEY: The staff of the Registrar-General were temporarily moved from the Custom-House because the rooms they occupied there were urgently required for Customs purposes. The house at the West End, to which they were moved, is one that happened to be vacant.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: When are they to be removed?

*Mr. KEARLEY: In a year's time, I think.

General Register Office Clerks.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many vacancies have occurred by death or retirement, since the Reorganisation Committee of 1888, amongst clerks in the General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen in receipt of salaries of £250 and upwards; how many clerks have been advanced to classification of £250 and upwards as a result of such vacancies; how many clerks in that office are now over sixty years of age in receipt of their maximum salary of £400 and upwards, with full pensionable service; and whether, seeing that in July, 1904, the late President of the Board of Trade admitted that promotion was stagnant, it is his intention to take any action in the matter with a view of facilitating promotion.

*MR. KEARLEY: A Committee of 1888 reported that the staff of the Registrar General of Seamen was greatly in excess of the requirements and much too expensive. Since that date eleven clerks of the old establishment in receipt of salaries of £250 a year and upwards have been retired. Of nine clerks of the old establishment still in the office five are over sixty years of age, have served forty years, and are in receipt of their maximum salary. A further Committee of 1898 recommended an establishment of twenty-one persons above the rank of abstractors, which is the present number. As stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Middlesbrough on March 26th, the matter is now under review.

Imports and Exports of Motor-Cars from and into France and the United Kingdom.

MR FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many motor-cars were imported into this country from France during each of the months of January, February, and March, and the value of them; and how many were exported from this country into France during the same months and the value of them.

MR. KEARLEY: Owing to the length of the Answer required to this Question, I propose to have the particulars printed and circulated with the Votes.

The following Figures give the information asked for:—

Statement showing the number and value of motor-cars imported into, and exported from, the United Kingdom in its trade with France during the months of January, February, and March, 1906.

	Number.	Value.
Motor Cars imported from—		
France in—		£
January	343	128,128
February	385	143,934
March	443	157,470
Motor Cars of British or Irish manufacture exported to France in—		
January	5	3,300
February	2	1,100
March	3	1,700
Motor Cars of Foreign or Colonial manufacture exported to France in—		
January	10	4,570
February	12	7,700
March	13	9,675

Furious Driving of Mail Carts.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Robert Eyres, a mail-van driver, charged, on Monday, April 2nd, at the Central Criminal Court with furious driving, who stated in his defence that he was on duty from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, and that his horse on the day of the alleged offence had been in harness for twelve hours; and will he state the hours usually worked by this man, and the hours worked on the day in question.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): It appears on inquiry that this man's duty covered a period of fourteen hours a day from 7 p.m. to 9 a.m.; and although he was not actually at work all the time, there being somewhat prolonged intervals between different journeys, I propose to look a little further into the matter. As regards the horses, it is stated they only work on alternate days.

Register of Teachers.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to Section 4 of the Board of Education Act of 1899, under which provision is taken for the setting up of a register of teachers to contain the names of the registered teachers arranged in alphabetical order, with an entry after the name of each showing the date of registration, and giving a brief record of his qualifications and experience; whether, under this section, Orders in Council were adopted on March 6th, 1902, and August 11th, 1902, providing for the setting up of a register of teachers in two columns, one confined to teachers eligible for service in public elementary schools, and the other to teachers eligible for service in schools other than elementary; and whether, in view of the difference between the terms of the Act and the terms of the Orders in Council, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): My attention has been called to the discrepancy referred to. I am satisfied that the register in its present shape, even if legal, which seems to be doubtful, gives justifiable dissatisfaction to various branches of the teaching profession. Further, no alterations which would remove these objections have been found possible, and it has therefore been decided that a clause should be inserted in the coming Bill which, if passed by Parliament, will have the effect of bringing the register to an end. Arrangements will be made for returning the fees.

The Turner Bequest.

MR. FULLERTON (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how long the Ruskin paintings, now being restored at the Gallery of British Art, have been the property of the nation; who is responsible for their having been withheld from public view; and whether means will be taken to ensure that any other works of art in the possession of the country will be either exhibited or disposed of.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): My hon. friend doubtless refers to the paintings and drawings by Turner known as the Turner Bequest. These were placed in the custody of the National Gallery Trustees in 1856, and the responsibility for not exhibiting them rests with the Trustees and Director of the Gallery for the time being from that date onwards. I could not give a pledge which would involve interference with the discretion of the Trustees and Director in deciding whether works of art entrusted to them should be immediately exhibited.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Can the hon. Gentleman say what the value of these pictures is supposed to be?

MR. MCKENNA: I will find out if a Question is put down.

St. James's Park.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he could see his way to opening the new road across St. James's Park into Piccadilly.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): This road was not constructed to carry wheeled traffic, and there is no intention of opening it for that purpose either now or in the future.

New Government Buildings.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if special foundations have been laid in the new Government offices with a view to erecting the towers as designed by the late Mr. Brydon; and what would have been the saving if the special foundations in question had not been completed.

MR. HARCOURT: The reply to the first paragraph is in the negative.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works what is the estimated cost of building the towers for the new Government offices in Whitehall: and what sums have already been expended upon the materials and the necessary preparation of stone and scaffoldings.

MR. HARCOURT: The cost of building the towers is not separately stated in the Estimate, and cannot therefore be given without considerable calculation. As regards the second part of this Question, the measuring surveyors have the matter in hand, but some time must elapse before any figures are available.

Scottish Police Grievances.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the claims of the Scottish police to be treated more on an equality with their English comrades with regard to pay and pensions than is now the case.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I have duly considered the hon. Member's Question. Any claim for improvement of conditions of service put forward on behalf of the Scottish police generally, is, I understand, restricted to the matter of pensions and does not apply to rates of pay. The actuarial investigations made in 1901 at the instance of the Select Committee on the Police Superannuation (Scotland) Bill of that year show that, if the desired improvement of pension scales is granted, the increased charge can only be provided for by considerably augmenting the present revenues of the pension funds; and having regard to the very large proportion of these revenues represented by the existing Exchequer Grant, it would appear that any such increase must come from local sources. If, in the light of the conclusions arrived at by the Select Committee of 1901, and of the further consideration which they have given to the subject since the Report of that Committee was published, the county and borough police should see fit to submit proposals to me upon this subject, I shall be happy to consider them.

Seine Fishing in Scottish Waters.

MR. EUGENE WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been drawn to the prohibition of seine or drift-net fishing in the Forth and other rivers of Scotland, and the numbers of fishermen who are thereby thrown out of employment; and whether he is prepared to take any action in the matter.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am informed that hang or drift-net fishing for salmon in estuaries in Scotland is now illegal, in consequence of a decision of the House of Lords. I am not aware to what extent this has had the effect of throwing fishermen out of employment, and with the information before me I am not satisfied of the necessity for action.

Lord Longford's Westmeath Estate.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what stage has the sale of Lord Longford's Westmeath Estate reached; will the Estates Commissioners, notwithstanding the zones, exercise their power of revising prices in the cases on that estate in which tenants who had got second-term rents fixed signed, under duress and under protest, agreements based upon their first-term rents; and what provision has been made or will be made for the occupants of uneconomic holdings on that estate, including the cottagers at Rathwire.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that advances in respect of the estate mentioned were made, and the holdings vested in the tenants, on July 27th, 1905. I have no information as to the concluding part of the Question.

Untenanted Lands at Oldcastle.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have received a memorial or resolution from the Oldcastle District Council relative to the distribution of untenanted lands in that district; what stage has the proposed purchase and re-sale of the Rotherham and Kearney untenanted estates reached; has any draft scheme for the distribution of them been drawn up; and will the draft scheme, when ready, be submitted to the district council, or to any person on behalf of the applicants, before its final adoption.

Mr. BRYCE: The Commissioners have no record of the receipt of the resolution referred to. Their inspector has reported on the Rotherham Estate, and is about to report on the Kearney Estate, and the Commissioners will consider both reports in due course. The distribution of the untenanted lands has not yet been decided upon. The Commissioners will duly consider any suggestions submitted by the district council or by any person on behalf of the people of the locality.

Tighe Estate.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have received a memorial from the Delvin District Council relative to the distribution of untenanted land in that district; what stage has the sale of the Tighe Estate, in that and the adjoining parishes, reached; will the Commissioners, before approving of that sale, require the estate to be sold in its entirety, including the untenanted lands of Lisclogher, for the relief of congestion; and will the draft scheme for this latter purpose be submitted to the district council or to any person on behalf of the people, for its final adoption.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have received the memorial referred to. They have received, but not yet dealt with, an originating application in respect of the sale of the Tighe Estate. The Commissioners will carefully consider all the circumstances before deciding on the mode in which the untenanted land is to be dealt with, and they will also consider any suggestions submitted by the district council or by any person on behalf of the people of the locality.

Irish Land Commission.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, in view of the want of confidence in the impartiality of the Irish Land Commission, and the belief that the decisions to which this is due are the result of the forms, rules, methods, procedure, and practice now in force, he will, at an early date, in the interest of the Commission itself, and of the parties before it, afford Parliament an opportuinty of discussing those forms, rules, methods, procedure, and practice, with a view to their amendment.

Mr. BRYCE: Criticisms from both sides are passed on the Land Commission as they are passed upon other public bodies, but I am not aware of any ground for the statements contained in the Question. For a discussion of the matters which the hon. Member desires to discuss opportunities can no doubt be found during the present session of Parliament.

Colonel Gascoigne's Limerick Estate.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that for some time negotiations for sale and purchase have been going on between Colonel Gasgoigne and his tenants, in and around the town of Kilfinane, in the county of Limerick; can he say how matters stand with the agricultural tenants, and have their cases come before the Estates Commissioners; have the cases of the town tenants been brought under the notice of the Estates Commissioners, although Colonel Gasgoigne professed his intention of allowing a sale to them also; and will he use his influence to induce the Estates Commissioners to move in that direction, so as to effect an arrangement on behalf of the town tenants, whose interests, if the rural tenants will purchase by themselves, shall be materially injured and imperilled.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them. They have also received a memorial from town tenants in Kilfinane asking to be included in the sale, and this memorial will be duly considered by the Commissioners when they are dealing with the estate in its order of priority.

Lord Clonmel's Doon Estate.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland has Lord Clonmel as yet brought before the Estates Commissioners the sale to his tenants of his estate in Doon, county Limerick; are the town tenants of Doon included in the arrangement; and, if not, can he take steps to bring about such an issue.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the originating application in respect of the sale of this estate includes a few of the plots in the village of Doon, but the majority are excluded. The Commissioners have not yet declared the lands comprised in the application to be an estate. They will, I have no doubt, consider any application which may be made to them by the tenants of town holdings.

Mrs. Hartigan's Case.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will recommend the Estates Commissioners to move in the direction of making an arrangement for the restoration to Mrs. Hartigan, of Clorhane, Croom, county Limerick, the farm held by her late husband, Patrick Hartigan, of the same address, from Mr. Smyth, of Ballinantry, Bruff, county Limerick, which farm belonged to the Hartigan family for the last hundred years, but owing to an increase of rent was surrendered a few years ago, seeing that an amicable settlement can the more easily be effected by the fact that the landlord, Mr. Smyth, through his agent, works the farm himself.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that, at the request of Mrs. Hartigan, they have approached the landlord with the object of assisting in her restoration to the farm formerly occupied by her deceased husband. In reply, the landlord has informed the Commissioners that Hartigan was not evicted, but surrendered the holding nearly twenty years ago, and that he, the owner, is now farming the lands himself and does not intend to sell them.

Land Commission Appointments.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, in connection with the appointment of temporary assistant Commissioners in the Land Commissions for the ensuing year, five officers of standing and approved capacity and experience have been dismissed without reason assigned, and although no fault had been found with their work; whether to the vacancies thus created five gentlemen have been appointed who were all Nationalists, prominently identified with political movements, and whether this principle of officially rewarding political services was to govern all future appointments to the Land Commission?

MR. BRYCE: I thank the hon. Member for giving me the opportunity of correcting a misstatement. It is not the fact that any officers have been dismissed from the post of assistant Commissioner under the Land Act, or that the action of the Government has created any vacancies. The fact is that out of twenty-nine temporary assistant Commissioners who had been appointed for a term of three years only, that term being expressly stated in the warrants issued to them, and who had, therefore, no vested interest or other claim of any kind entitling them to re-appointment, five have not received fresh warrants on the expiry of their term of service, and other gentlemen have been appointed in their place. I know nothing whatever as to the political opinions or political action, or as to the attitude in land questions, either of any of the five gentleman who have not been reappointed or of the five who have now been appointed. The new appointees have been selected out of a very large number of candidates solely because they were found upon a careful examination of their capacity and experience, as compared with the capacity and experience of those whose terms were expiring, the qualifications of all of whom were similarly examined, to be better fitted for the important work they have to do than the five gentleman who have not been reappointed. No person has been rewarded for political services, and the only principle which will govern future appointments to the Land Commission is that of endeavouring to secure the services of the most capable men. That principle, and that only, is the one which has been followed in the present instance.

MR. LONSDALE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the appointment of these five gentleman.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise out of the Answer.

Irish Local Loans.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the total amount of loans to Ireland from the Local Loans

Fund since the passing of The Local Loans Act, 1887; what rate of interest is the Treasury compelled to pay for the money thus loaned; what interest does it charge borrowers; what is the profit made during this period by the Treasury; and whether this profit is used for the benefit of the English borrowers from the same fund.

MR. MCKENNA: The loans to borrowers in Ireland from the Local Loans Fund between March 31st, 1887, and March 31st, 1905, amounted to £19,087,755, advanced partly by the Commissioners of Public Works and partly by the Land Commission. The average rate of interest at which money has been raised for the Local Loans Fund during that period is £3 0s. 4d. per cent. The rates of interest chargeable on loans made by the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland range between 2¾ and 4¼ per cent., according to the date at which each loan was advanced and the period in which it is repayable. The Land Commission loans bear interest at 3⅛ per cent. After deduction of expenses, it is calculated that the average net yield from the Board of Works loans is at present £3 3s. 10d. per cent., from the Land Commission loans £2 18s. 6d. per cent. The surplus income of the Local Loans Fund is carried by the National Debt Commissioners to a separate fund which, as provided by Section 3 of the Public Works Loans Act, 1904, is applicable to make good the deficiency in the capital account of the Local Loans Fund caused by the issue of Local Loans Stock at discount. The rates of interest charged on loans to local authorities in Great Britain are the same as those charged on loans to local authorities in Ireland.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the total annual charge for the repayment of the loan of £95,000 for the construction of the Fenit pier; what is the total sinking fund annually paid, and whether this is a fixed or a variable amount; whether he is aware that although 4 per cent. interest is paid for the loan the Treasury raises this money at 3 per cent.; and whether, seeing that in the Treasury Minute of May 4th, 1887, it was recommended that collaterally secured on rates, as in the case of the Fenit pier should be given at 3¼ per cent. interest, and that the profit made by the Treasury on loans of this character has to be paid by ratepayers already overburdened and living in poor, congested districts, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. MCKENNA: The Answer which I gave the hon. Member on the 22nd ultimo[†] and that which I have just given him contain, I think, all the information which he now asks for.

Bangor (County Down) Post Office.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received the Resolution adopted with only two dissentients at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Bangor, county Down, on the subject of the site selected for the new post office; and, whether before proceeding further with the contemplated arrangements, he will take care to ascertain whether they are likely to be productive of great public inconvenience.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): In reply to the hon. Member's Question and to the unstarred Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone (South Division)[‡] which I may perhaps answer at the same time, a report of the public meeting referred to has been sent to this Department and I have also received a copy of the Resolution carried at that meeting. I am not aware of the circumstances under which the Resolution in favour of the site which has been selected was carried at a meeting of the district council. It is reported that the Resolution was finally carried by seven votes to five. The question of a site for the new post office was very carefully considered, and the position of the proposed new office, at the corner of Main Street and Castle Square, is deemed on the whole the most suitable. But under the circumstances I have called for a further Report on the matter.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 590-1.

[‡] The unstarred Question of the hon. Member for South Tyrone was as follows:—

"To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to a meeting held in Bangor, county Down, on the 23rd ultimo, in reference to the selection of a site for the post office in that town; whether he is aware that the Resolution in favour of the proposed site was carried at the district council by the chairman, who is the vendor of the site in question, giving a second or casting vote in its favour; and whether, as the site is in an inconvenient district and objected to by a large number of the inhabitants, he will take these facts into account before deciding between the various sites."

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Was not the Resolution carried by the casting vote of the actual vendor of the site?

Mr. CORBETT (Down, N.): A most improper observation!

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: On a point of order, Sir, I asked a Question with a view to getting information, and the hon. Member declared it a most improper observation. Would it not rest with you, Sir, to call me to order?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Expressions very often escape hon. Members in all quarters of the House.

Mr. CORBETT: May I explain.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The incident is closed.

Mr. SLOAN asked if they might take it that the site had not been definitely decided upon?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he was having further inquiries made.

Athy Post Office.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can give the date on which the post-office authorities advertised for sites on which to build suitable premises for a post-office in Athy; whether three offers of sites have been made, and on what date were they offered; what difficulty, if any, has arisen to prevent the choice of site being made; and whether, in view of the inconvenience which the delay has caused to the public and to those who desire to utilise some of the sites for building purposes, if not taken for the post-office, he can say approximately when the post-office authorities will definitely decide.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Sites were advertised for in March, 1904, but as stated in my reply to the hon. Member on the 21st ultimo, no offers were received at the time. Possible sites were brought under notice in February and May, 1905. One of these is suitable in most respects, but certain restrictions are imposed by the owner in connection with a right of way and there is also a difficulty in connection with a head rent. The consideration of the matter has undoubtedly taken a long time, which I regret, but which was unavoidable. I am now, however, advised that the restrictions referred to may safely be left to be dealt with at a later stage, and I propose, therefore, to take steps to acquire the site, provided, of course, that the title proves to be satisfactory.

The Judge Advocate-General.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what member of His Majesty's Government would be responsible for the dismissal of the Judge Advocate-General; whether Mr. Milvain was appointed under any contract; if so, with whom was the contract made and what were its terms; and will he lay a copy of it upon the Table of the House.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): In reference to any question of dismissal the Secretary of State for War would be responsible for the advice given to His Majesty. The Judge Advocate-General was not appointed by any formal contract. The terms of the appointment were as follows:—(a) The salary to be £2,000 a year; (b) The devotion of his whole time to the duties of the post; (c) The retention of the post, subject to continued efficiency, to the age of seventy, without claim to pension or gratuity on retirement.

Mr. PAUL asked if this meant that the Judge Advocate-General held office at the pleasure of the Crown and of the Secretary of State for War

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know what is the proper phrase to use. I hesitate to commit myself.

Plural Voters Bill.

Mr. FULLERTON (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will fix a day before the Easter holidays for the introduction of the Plural Voters Bill.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, I am afraid I cannot give any pledge that the Bill will be introduced before Easter.

Privy Council—Kaffir Appeal.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can lay upon the Table an authorised Report of the proceedings before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with reference to the petition for leave to appeal in respect of the twelve natives recently executed in Natal.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir, I am prepared to lay upon the Table a Report of the proceedings in this case, that is to say the petition, the affidavit in support of the petition and the judgment.

Vicar and Passive Resister.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I desire to ask the Home Secretary whether he has any official information as to the case of the Rev T. T. Anderson, Baptist minister at Kirkby Stephen, who was on Monday last sentenced to ten days imprisonment for non-payment of the education rate by the local justices under the chairmanship of the vicar of a neighbouring parish; and whether, in view of all the circumstances of the case, he can take steps to secure Mr. Anderson's release.

MR. GLADSTONE: This is a question which refers to a civil debt, and I regret to say that I have no power whatever to interfere.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to see that reverend gentlemen do not adjudicate in these cases in the same way that employers of labour are prohibited from adjudicating in factory cases.

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice is required of that Question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): May I ask as to the business for next week.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) said the Motion for the adjournment for the holidays would not be the first order on Wednesday. There might be a few Bills before it. There was no desire to take contentious Bills. The discussion on the Second Reading of the Workmen's Compensation Bill would be resumed on Monday night if the conversation on the introduction of the Education Bill was concluded. If not, the Workmen's Compensation Bill would be taken on Tuesday.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said they would have to go back many years to find a precedent for taking anything but the Motion for adjournment on the day the House rose for the holidays.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think two years ago the right hon. Gentleman, who was then Home Secretary, introduced the Aliens Bill on a similar occasion.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale) appealed to the Prime Minister not to again take the Workmen's Compensation Bill till after Easter, on the ground that the Bill had only just been printed and that the seaports interested ought to have an opportunity of considering its provisions and instructing their Members

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, I cannot do that. Had it not been for the hon. Member the Second Reading would have been taken yesterday.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the

Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill:—Mr. James Bryce, Mr. Long, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Abraham (Cork), Mr. O'Malley, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Captain Craig, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. Barrie.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Marine Insurance Bill [Lords]:—Mr. Beauchamp, Sir Seymour King, Mr. Gibb, Mr. Hooper, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Robinson, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. W. H. Davies, Sir William Bull, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Bertram, Mr. Maclean, and Mr. Charles Roberts.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Shackleton and Mr. Idris; and had appointed in substitution; Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Winfrey.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Boards of Conservators of Fisheries in Ireland," presented by Mr. Joyce; supported by Mr. Boland, Mr. Flavin, Mr. Halpin, Mr. O'Shee, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. Lundon and Mr. Kendal O'Brien; to be read on Wednesday May 2nd, and to be printed. [Bill 148.]

DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Drunkenness in Ireland; and for purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. T. W. Russell; supported by Mr. Glendinning, Captain Donelan, Mr. Jordan, and Mr. Sloan; to be read a second time on Tuesday, April 24th, and to be printed. [Bill 149.]

FOREIGN TRAWLERS (REGULATION) BILL.

"To provide for the better prevention of fishing by foreign Trawl vessels within areas closed to British Trawl vessels," presented by Mr. Alexander Black; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Weir, Mr Cathcart Wason, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Williamson and Mr. Murray; to be read a second time upon Friday, June 1st, and to be printed. [Bill 150.]

SMALL HOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of Small Holdings in Scotland," presented by Mr. Alexander Black; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Weir, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Williamson, and Mr. Murray; to be read a second time upon Friday 1st June, and to be printed. [Bill 151.]

AGED PENSIONERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the Aged deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 25th, and to be printed. [Bill 152.]

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

"To enable His Majesty's Postmaster-General to acquire lands in London, Birmingham. Blackburn, Bromley, Torquay, Carnforth, and Walton-on-Thames for the public service; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 153.]

SUPPLY [5th ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES 1906-7.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,050, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a Grant-in-Aid of certain Expenses connected with emigration."

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I have put down a notice for a reduction of the salary of the Under-Secretary of State, but I understand that it would be more convenient that I should say what I have to say upon a Motion for the reduction of the salary of the Secretary of State himself. I should like to make it clear at the outset that I have no desire to quarrel at this moment with the policy of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I have a quarrel, such as it is, not with the policy of the Under-Secretary, but with the manner in which he has pursued the policy which has been decided for him by the Secretary of State in the other House. I understand that the Prime Minister having given this opportunity for a discussion upon the Colonial Vote, it would not be convenient if I were to attempt to disturb the course of proceedings by moving a reduction of the salary of the Under-Secretary. I trust I may be able to say what I have to say in a very moderate spirit.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) rose to a point of order, but the right hon. Gentleman refused to give way.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Sit down.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER resumed his seat.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL, on a point of order, asked whether, if the right hon. Gentleman now moved the reduction of the salary of the Under-Secretary, other hon. Members who desired to move a reduction of the salary of the Secretary of State for the Colonies would not be debarred from doing so, seeing that the salary of the Under-Secretary came subsequent to that of the Secretary of State.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question does not arise. The right hon. Gentleman has distinctly stated that he does not propose to move a reduction of salary of the Under-Secretary of State.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think the hon. Member's interruption was discourteous and unnecessary.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Probably not many hon. Members heard what the right hon. Gentleman said. He talked of the discourteous interruption of the hon. Member. Although I am not responsible for the hon. Member in any sense, yet I do not think that was a phrase that was deserved by the hon. Member, and I think the right hon. Gentleman should withdraw it.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): The Prime Minister no doubt did not hear the remark of the hon. Member. He called upon my right hon. friend in a very discourteous manner to sit down, and when my right hon. friend announced his intention not to move the reduction of the salary of the Under-Secretary, the hon. Member taunted him with making use of stage thunder. That was an unnecessary, and, in my opinion, a discourteous interruption.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the phrase was unparliamentary in the sense that I need call the right hon. Gentleman to order. I think I may appeal to the Committee now to allow the debate to proceed.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not think I have offended in this matter. I thought I had made it clear why I was not moving the Resolution I had put down on the Paper. The Prime Minister has given us this day for the Motion on the reduction of the Secretary of State's salary, and I do not in the least want to interfere with that arrangement. I do want, however, to say something with regard to the Colonial Office Estimates, and I want to say it, if I can, in a moderate spirit. I believe that what I should like to say—and what I wish were to be said by someone much more competent than myself—represents the view of a great many moderate men and women of both Parties throughout this land. I should be forgetting my duty if I said anything which savoured of Party heat or of a Party character, and in challenging the policy of the Under-Secretary of State I need hardly say I am animated by no personal motive at all. I entertain no vindictive feeling. Such feeling is absolutely foreign to my mind, and, if I were to say any word which seemed like expressing such a feeling, that word would not express my view. I wish, on behalf of my Party and as I believe on behalf of a great many other people who do not belong to my Party, to challenge the method by which the right hon. Gentleman has thought it necessary to pursue his idea of political duty in carrying out the policy imposed upon him. There is an electric phrase which the hon. Member himself is acquainted with, about an "old man in a hurry." That is a very pathetic position. An old man in a hurry has too little time to carry out the ideals of his life. He has the pressure of his waning years, and one may make many excuses for his doing that which in his youth he would scarcely have cared to do. I can find no such excuse for what with great respect I would call a young man in a hurry. If the hon. Member lives as many years as I hope he will, he will have ample time to achieve that great position in the State which we all hope he will achieve. He will also have time to conform to the sound traditions of British statesmanship, and he will not be under the necessity of short circuiting those traditions, and of presenting his views in a way which is certainly most unpalatable to us on this side of the House and to many persons outside the House. I honestly believe that behind the apparent desire on the part of the hon. Member to be on the wining side——

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was in order in referring to the conduct of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies on this Vote.

*The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is raising a Question which concerns the conduct of the office, and I think it would be quite convenient to let the debate go on.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Really my whole point is not an attack. I do not want to use any offensive words and I have used none yet, but I propose, if I can, to criticise, the manner in which the Under-Secretary has conducted the great business of his Department in the House. I believe the time will come when we shall have evidence of the patriotic desire which I believe is in the breast of the hon. Gentleman, though I must confess that hitherto we have not had the happiest signs of its existence. I do not think the policy the hon. Gentleman has pursued is, or can be, a wise one. The hon. Gentleman has made many attacks on the Unionist Party. That is part of the business, and we all expect it, but the hon. Member has not yet realised that the Unionist Party, although a small Party in the House, does represent an enormous power in the country. Over 2,500,000 votes were polled on behalf of it, and if we had our rights the majority supporting the right hon. Gentleman would not, as I calculate it, be 300, but twenty-five. But, whether that be so or not, whether we are a powerful Party in this House or not, we are a powerful Party in the country, and some of the taunts which the hon. Member has thought necessary to hurl at this Party I thought rather missed their mark. I hope he will live to believe, as I do, that there is an immense force, an immense righteous force, behind those who represent the Unionists in this House which it is his duty to remember and to regard. The hon. Member has denied that the Unionist Party has almost any *locus standi* in this House. ["Oh, oh."] Yes; he has taunted us with our small numbers. ["Question."] I must really ask to be allowed to proceed with my argument. I do not think the hon. Member himself has been particularly gentle in his dealing with the Party to which I belong, and I am quite certain he is the last person who would object to my making what defence I think necessary of my Party. The hon. Member has attacked our Party, but he has admitted that we possess this great privilege, that, though we have lost the confidence of this country, we have retained in a large measure the confidence of the Colonies. [A laugh.] I do not think that is a matter to laugh at; it is a very great possession. I sometimes think the hon. Gentleman is devoting some of his great talents to the task of insuring that the power which the Administration of this country has obtained over the Colonies shall be wasted and lost. He seems to me to be in a fair way of succeeding, but that is not a matter to be proud of. It is absolutely true that the Unionist Party has obtained a large measure of sympathy and support throughout the whole of our Colonial Empire. How was that sympathy obtained? It was obtained by long years of sympathetic administration, and it is because I am a strong believer in the necessity for the continuance of that tradition of sympathy in the administration of this country towards the Colonies, that I object to the policy of the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary. What is the alternative policy which we are having put in place of this policy of sympathy? The hon. Gentleman taunted us the other night with doing or saying something that was likely to estrange colonial opinion. I appeal to the judgment of the Committee, and I would ask whether a great deal has not already been said from the Treasury Bench this session which has done more to estrange colonial opinion than anything that has been said by the Unionist Party for the last ten years. The hon. Gentleman has ranged himself against all those who are loyal to this country in South Africa. He has used expressions, not once nor twice, but many times, calculated to wound, and which did deeply wound, our fellow-subjects in South Africa. He has attacked, in the most open manner, the principle of colonial self-government. He has attacked our great South African Colonies, and he has attributed to our countrymen in South Africa motives and actions which he would be the very first to repudiate if he had been charged with entertaining or committing them himself. The hon. Gentleman is perfectly entitled to express his opinion as to the wisdom or unwisdom of employing Chinese indentured labour in South Africa, but I object very strongly to the embittered and empoisoned language with which he has conducted his campaign against the use of this indentured labour. I heard him speak, with a note of triumph, of the effect of the policy which a sense of duty has compelled the Government to impose on the principal industry in South Africa. He told the House that the proof of the effective character of that policy was the great fall in South African securities. That is, no doubt, a legitimate observation; but why was it necessary to barb it with the further remark that "we were now using ball cartridge"? That was a remark which was intended to wound and did wound. It was a remark calculated to show that the Government were doing something which was calculated to produce, and did produce, great injury to the principal industry in South Africa. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the whole question of Chinese labour in South Africa and said "it was a melancholy and notable derogation from any standard of labour Ordinance, even the lowest, tolerated in the British Empire." That may be a legitimate opinion for hon. Members below the gangway who have no responsibility; but when I think how little has come from that extraordinary statement, how little that very severe condemnation has been followed by any corresponding modification of that Ordinance, I think something would have been gained, and little would have been lost, if His Majesty's representative in this House had refrained from a condemnation which must have been very wounding to South Africa. The hon. Gentleman has attributed motives broadcast to the men from whom he differs, whom he has declared over and over again to be working for purely personal, private purposes, and to whom he has denied the right to believe that they were working for the greatest good of the State in which they live. He has made the whole question of Chinese labour a Party weapon. We know now that much that was said on that question has been withdrawn. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] Yes. A great deal that has been said has been withdrawn. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Not a word."] Why, the whole accusation of slavery has been withdrawn. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] That may comfort the hon. Members who make the interruption, but it certainly will not shake my opinion—and those who heard the expressions used by Ministers in the other House, and indeed in this House, can have no doubt at all about the withdrawal. It is a smaller matter, but I object again to the hasty condemnation by the hon Gentleman of Mr. Davis, of whom I know nothing, but who I understand is well known in Pretoria and Johannesburg. I do not think it wise, in the present temper of South Africa, to suggest to the House that some words used by that gentleman were used when he was drunk. What other meaning could there be for telling the House that Mr. Davis was speaking after dinner? If the hon. Gentleman had limited himself to saying that it was inadvisable of Mr. Davis to make the remarks he did in the presence of the High Commissioner he would have said all that was required. Then we come to the hon. Member's attack upon Lord Milner, whom South Africa has delighted to honour. From beginning to end we have had one series of insults—I can use no other word—thrown at Lord Milner. We heard first of "a man of fine profession and poor performance." Is not that an intentionally insulting phrase? We heard of his "wicked permission." Again, is that a word which can with advantage be used by an Under-Secretary who wishes to remove ill-feeling and diminish bad blood in South Africa? He compared Lord Milner with Mr. Parnell, and the only thing he could find to say was that Mr. Parnell was innocent while Lord Milner was guilty. He may have entertained that opinion, but again I suggest that that is not the trope and metaphor we should desire to use if we were simply engaged in the task of soothing colonial opinions. He said he did not propose to pursue him further, and then he told us that he would not use any undue or excessive exertion to defend Lord Milner from attacks which might be made upon him. I heard the hon. Member's condemnation of Lord Milner, and I found it tiresome, but when it came to the hon. Member's praise of Lord Milner I confess my gorge rose. The hon. Member, when he spoke the other day, interrupted me because, he said, I had used a discourteous expression. I hope I did not. I used an expression which was forced strongly upon me when I heard Lord Milner taunted with his poor estate. [Cries of "No."] When I heard that he was "suffering from the mortification which he must have experienced because what he had toiled for was not accomplished, because he was utterly discredited by the people of Great Britain, because he knew that the arrangements in which he had consumed the energies of his life were about to be reversed and dissolved," and that Lord Milner had "ceased to be a factor in public events," then I confess I did give way to an expression which, though not unparliamentary, was certainly a true expression of my feelings on that kind of treatment of a man whom so many of us esteem, honour, and love. The hon. Member spoke of "the tolerance of overwhelming victory." I do not know whether he considers that in what he said about Lord Milner he was giving full effect to the tolerance of overwhelming victory. I think the victory will rest yet with this despised, this broken, and this forgotten man.

Lastly, we come to the case of Natal, and there I am bound to say I do see signs of grace. The speech of the hon. Member a few nights ago is fresh in the recollection of the House. Of course, he made the usual attack on the Unionist Party. He must get cheers from his Party although he has to stoop low to get them. Before I conclude I will give the hon. Member an illustration of what I mean by stooping low to get a cheer. But undoubtedly he did turn over a new leaf with regard to Natal. Most of his speech was such as any statesman might have made from these Benches, and might have been applauded by all Parties in the House of Commons. He praised the Government of Natal, and he praised the Governor, Sir Henry McCallum. That was a great change for the better. He approved of the executions. Well, that may have been a wise thing to do. [Cries of "No."]

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I said the trial was not unfair.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, do not let us be put off in that matter. The hon. Member and his Government either did approve of these executions or they did not. Do you mean to say that with the power and the right to stop these executions, and having permitted it, they did not approve of these twelve men being put to death? They approved of the executions, and he said most truly and justly that the crime was the crime of murder. He told us most truly and fairly that every one of the persons executed had been personally concerned in the commission of that murder. He administered, it is true, a lecture to the Natal Government, which I think might have been omitted. It greatly marred his speech, if I may say so. He greatly marred his speech also by the reference to the concession of self-government in Natal. I think that remark was most mischievous. What was the condition of Natal? For forty years Natal had gone through the probationary period which precedes self-government. The Orange River Colony has gone through two years of a similar period. The population of Natal is almost to a man—I suppose to a man, if you take the British element—loyal to the British Crown. Who would say the same thing of the Orange River Colony? Yet the Colony of Natal is to be told that it obtained its self-government too soon, while in the same week we are thrusting on the Orange River Colony this doubtful privilege—this doubtful possession of self-government. I think he might have omitted with great advantage this reference to the premature bestowal of self-government on the Colony of Natal. There again I find the same characteristic which I find in everyone of the passages I have ventured to criticise—I find something calculated to wound, and yet which could not by any possibility result in any practical issue. Is he going to take away self-government? He cannot do it. He himself has told us that the boon once given cannot be withdrawn. Self-government must be accepted with all its responsibilities. Then, why, when all Natal is tried by an affliction the nature of which we cannot conceive, should he select that time to scold the Colony and threaten a withdrawal which he cannot effect? But that is an interlude. I wish to complete my survey of the speech the hon. Gentleman made the other day. He told us that this trouble was not due to the poll tax, and he flatly contradicted the hon. Gentleman below the gangway. The Under-Secretary of State said it was not due to the imposition of the poll tax, but that it was due to a deeper and a wider cause. It was due, he said, in the first place to the war, and in the second place to the Ethiopian movement. Lastly, there was the interference of Lord Elgin. I think the hon. Member, if I may say so—I do not know whether I carry with me all the Members on this side of the House—made out a very good case in one respect. Although we may doubt the final wisdom of what was done, undoubtedly the motives which animated Lord Elgin were humane motives—motives which appeal to all men in this House and in the country; whether it is wise to forget the great issue to satisfy yourself on the smaller issue is a matter of doubt. But no doubt Lord Elgin hesitated when without information he was called upon to use the authority which he possessed to sanction the execution of twelve of his fellow creatures. But why is it that Lord Elgin's action has given so much offence in the Colonies and caused so much trouble here? I saw a very pregnant passage in a newspaper with whose views I very often differ, but with whose general tone I have very much sympathy. The *Westminster Gazette* said—

> "If the previous administration had done this, none of this trouble would have arisen."

That may be an exaggeration. It is an exaggeration behind which there is an enormous amount of truth. This action was taken by Lord Elgin in the interest of humanity, and why was it that the Colony was in a flame? It was because this Government was suspect.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Because of your speeches.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I have failed greatly in the task I have undertaken if I have not made it evident why the Government was suspect. I will take up the interruption. I will ask whether I am not justified in saying that it is due in a great measure to speeches made on the other side of the House. The hon. Gentleman is suspect because he has touched the great principle of self-government in the Colonies. He said the other day that "the maxim 'Trust the people' ought to follow the flag." Is he giving effect to that maxim? Not at all. What did he say? He said the Government are prepared to assert that "the House of Commons should be consulted on all matters affecting the Colonies which may be said to involve in their just and truest sense Imperial interests." "This Parliament," he said, "has rightly aspired and rightly claimed to exert an influence on the course of politics which shall be intimate, immediate, and direct," and he truly said that no other Parliament in modern times has put forward that claim. Lastly, and this is not an unimportant passage, he told us that with regard to a matter which intimately concerns the whole welfare of the Transvaal "the Government will pay no attention to the Transvaal assembly, however unanimous," and that "as long as the Transvaal retains a policy which is repugnant to the opinions of this country the Government will veto the opinion of the Transvaal people." I am not here to exchange opinions about ethics, but I do say that whatever the ethics of the question may be, that is very bad politics. I say you cannot live up to that declaration. You cannot make yourself the judge of moral questions between this country and the Colonies. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister yesterday, in what I thought was rather a flippant Answer to a *bona fide* Question, referred to the meaning of the moral view of the Colonial Office.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: "The spirit of morality entertained by the Colonial Office."

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That will quite satisfy my purpose. My point is a serious one. I say if we are to be arbiters of moral questions between this country and the Colonies we shall get into infinite trouble. I am not going to weary the Committee, but I could cite fifty instances which would reduce that proposition to absurdity. Only the other day we had a remarkable instance of what this meant in practice. We had an interjection from an hon. Member in regard to what had taken place in Natal. The interjection was one which I confess I regret. I still more regret the reception it received What was it? Let me recall the circumstance. An execution had taken place in Natal under the law, after a trial sanctioned by the Legislature, by the Executive of the Colony, by the Governor, and by His Majesty's Government, and that act was described by an hon. Gentleman as "a bloodthirsty murder."

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.) rose.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member rise to a point of order?

MR. MYER: No, Sir. May I read from one of the prison authorities? It is a personal explanation. [Cries of "Order."]

*THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon gave way at first, but when he found that the hon. Member desired to make a personal explanation he refused to give way any longer. A personal explanation can be made later.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am in the memory of the Committee. We all heard the expression and the cheers with which it was received. But I refer to the expression, not so much because it was improper, but as an illustration of the impossibility of enforcing this doctrine which the Under-Secretary for the Colonies had laid down for our guidance. We never can, even if we ought to, make ourselves the censors of the morals of the Colonies. I say without hesitation that if an attempt were made for one year to act in regard to the Colonies upon the principles laid down by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, we should run the risk of losing the Empire. It cannot be done in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand, and it cannot be done in South Africa. You may attempt it, but it will lead you a great deal further than you think. The hon. Member told us that he relied on the great majority which the Government has, but I venture to believe that in that majority there are some hon. Members who will speak with that moderation which I desire, and who feel in their hearts that there is something in the point of view I have taken that these speeches of the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary for the Colonies are not calculated to soothe the distress and alarm felt in the Colonies. The hon. Member talked about imagination in politics. I agree. I think imagination is one of the greatest powers in politics and in life. The hon. Member for Tyneside spoke of the small population of Natal, and that it was not equal to the population of his own constituency. It is true, but let us apply the faculty of imagination. Some of us know that there was once a town called New Amsterdam, smaller no doubt than the constituency of the hon. Member, but if we translate New Amsterdam into New York we are confronted by a multiplication both of political power and of population that gives us something to think about. I feel that this policy of the Government is a mistaken policy. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has said many wise things, and some things of which I am not yet been able to perceive the wisdom. He has said one thing in which I believe there is no wisdom at all. He has frequently cited the text of scripture which says, "The eyes of the fool are in the ends of the earth." In my opinion the eyes of every man in this country which are not turned to the ends of the earth are eyes turned away from the true interests of this country. Hon. Members below the gangway apparently forget or ignore what is the central position. I am not going to labour that matter now, but anyone who thinks for a moment will perceive that the future of our race cannot conceivably be identified with the comparatively small number of people who are in these islands; that even now the primacy of our race is in passage to the other side of the Atlantic. It is certain that if we were by any rash act to deprive ourselves of those Colonies which other countries seek for, almost everything which makes life possible to the whole population of this country would be lost with them. Therefore, I hear with regret these contemptuous attacks on the Colonies, because they are small and cannot vie with these islands in population. In conclusion I will draw one moral. I do object in my own name, and in the name of hundreds of thousands and even of millions, to the tone and temper in which the hon. Member has approached these burning questions. No one will doubt the hon. Member's capabilities; no one will doubt the hon. Member's power to serve his country, but I would suggest that he might, with advantage, adhere in the future to his later manner and style of speech on the Natal question and not to his earlier style. If the hon. Gentleman does that he may lose a cheer or two from the hon. Member for Salford or Tyneside, but he will gain the esteem of many men who admire his qualities and would like to admire his policy. I would ask him to change his tone. It is not much to ask. By doing so he may forfeit the good opinion of Mr. Smuts, but I think he would win the good opinion, which he has lost, of every loyal Afrikander. [MINISTERIAL ironical laughter]. Surely that is not a small thing to possess. But, if the hon. Gentleman cannot, or if his conscience will not permit him, to approach Colonial matters in a different spirit, I would only express a hope that his talents might be devoted to some other task, say at the War Office. I am sure success will await him there, although I should regret it if he were to carry out his promises to reduce the Army by so many battalions, which, however, his colleague will not do. Or he might go to the Exchequer; but, at any rate, whatever Department the hon. Gentleman may go to, let him not exercise his talents either in the Foreign Office or in the Colonial Office. In this country we often use what are called in Ireland "Party expressions." They are well understood in this country, but people do not understand them in foreign countries or in the Colonies. People who are face to face with stern realities, as the people in Natal are, do not and cannot be expected to appreciate the true inwardness of the expressions which the hon. Gentleman has used. Therefore, I hope that the hon. Gentleman will either change his tone or else devote his talents to some other office than that to which he has been appointed; for of all the offices in the gift of the Crown it is the least suited to his particular qualities.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman move a reduction?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, I do not.

MR. A. E. W. MASON (Coventry) said that he spoke in the character of one who desired to forward in the most progressive spirit that social and domestic legislation for which the country was looking, but who at the same time agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon that in dealing with Imperial and Colonial concerns great prudence was required in administration and great moderation in discussion. The right hon. Gentleman had appealed to the House to be moderate in the discussion of these questions. He took down, as the right hon. Gentleman went on with his speech, a few of his own moderate expressions in regard to the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies was "A young man in a hurry," a phrase which, by the way, had not even the merit of an original production, but was merely that poor thing which they knew as an adaptation. "He was also anxious to be on the winning side;" and the kindly hope was expressed that "some day he might develop something in the way of patriotism;" "He makes use of empoisoned language; he is a member of a Government which is suspect." Here were sentences typical of the moderate language to which they were accustomed from the Opposition Benches. He thought that those who had listened, as he had done, to every speech which had been made upon Colonial matters since the second day of this session could only be driven to the conclusion that hon. Members on the Opposition Benches were determined to discuss these Colonial questions in no spirit except that of the partisan. He made one exception. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin made a most moderate and temperate speech the other night upon the subject of Natal. He (Mr. Mason) wished to recall to the House the opening day of the session. On that afternoon, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, whose absence they all deplored, for however they might be opposed to his policy, they recognised in him a very forceful and stimulating personality, made an earnest and sincere appeal for continuity in Colonial policy; but the very next day hon. Members opposite made speech after speech calling on the Government to prove their sincerity by at once reversing the policy of their predecessors. The attack reached its culmination in the speech of the right hon. Member for Dover, who, speaking with the authority of an ex-Cabinet Minister, declared that although the responsibility rested with the late Government while that Government was in power, it now rested entirely with His Majesty's Ministers. If that doctrine were to hold good—that each Government transferred, not merely its policy and the consequences of its policy, but all responsibility for its continuance to the shoulders of their successors, the day when there could be any continuity was very far off indeed. Nor could such a doctrine be fruitful of good to the Empire at large. He thought perhaps the right hon. Gentleman was not very serious in what he said. To quote the homely saying of Lord Milner, any stick would do to beat a dog with. During the whole of that debate upon the importation of Chinese labour, the contention was continually urged from the Opposition Benches that no real effort was being made by the Government to carry out its pledges, that the alterations in the Ordinance were trifling, and it was claimed that something more should be done. And having thus elicited the announcement that in the last resort the veto would be used, the Opposition at once turned round and said that nothing would be more disastrous to the future of the Colonies. In the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, they should have thought of that before. He thought that it would have been better if, when claiming that something more should be done, hon. Gentlemen had realised that those consequences must follow which they now deplored. On this side of the House they did not deplore the consequences. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had declared that the veto was a very dangerous thing. They had heard that the exercise of it would be an unconstitutional proceeding, but the right hon. Gentleman had against him the authority of Lord Milner, at all events, who had described the veto as having a certain power. He thought that if ever there was an occasion when it could be properly exercised by this country, it would be after so great a sacrifice of life and treasure as that which had been made, and in order to carry out the determination of the people who had made the sacrifice. They were told that this verdict on Chinese labour was gained by the grossest misrepresentation. But some Members had been in their constituencies since the debate upon the Address, and although the speeches of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite had been published, had been read, had been discussed, it could not be denied that the feeling of hostility to the system of Chinese labour ran just as deep and just as strong as ever it did before. He must say a word with reference to his hon. friend the Member for Gravesend, because he thought that much of the speech which he made the other night was not of the soothing kind which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon desired. He passed over the hon. Member's persistence in stating that the present Government had reversed the decision of the Natal Government after it had already been announced that the Government only postponed it. He came, however, to a more serious matter. The hon. Member had tried to move the adjournment of the House on the ground that there was an omission from the instructions of the Committee which was just going to set out for South Africa of a particular direction, that it should have in view the preserving of the two new colonies as integral parts of the British Empire. He had in his hand a copy of the Paper which gave that Committee its instructions, and no one who had read that Paper could have any doubt that the Committee was sent out to elicit facts with reference to the constituencies and the electorate with the precise object that the Government to be established should have permanence under the Crown. But every one had not this letter of instructions ready to his hand. Many people would only have the Reports of the debates to rely upon. He did not know what the intention of the hon. Member was, but the effect of his Motion for adjournment could only be to convey to such people that the Committee was sent out in order to loosen the ties between the mother country and the Colonies. Was that his intention as well as his effect? [Cries of "No."] It was not, and he gladly accepted the hon. Member's word, but his Motion was not a good example of that soothing system which was recommended by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the disturbances in Natal and also to the action of the Natal Government, and for his part he was not surprised that the Natal Government took precipitate action when it was fed upon such fiery stuff as came from the Opposition side of the House. The hon. Member referred to certain phrases and speeches which had been made by hon. Members upon this subject, and he wished to express his regret that such phrases as "blood-thirsty murder" had been shot out in the course of a Question and Answer across the floor of this House by an hon. Member who, when the matter came up for discussion a few hours later, did not rise in his place to justify the phrase. He also agreed that the vote of censure upon Lord Milner was a hampering mistake. It was not necessary that they should endorse the policy of the late Government in order to disapprove of such a Resolution. It was not necessary that they should accept all the eulogies which had been passed by the right hon. Gentleman and others upon that distinguished man in order to oppose it. He frankly admitted that he thought that there was a greater man than Lord Milner in the history of South Africa. There was a most distinguished soldier, a veteran of Waterloo, who was Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner, to whose memory justice, he believed, had not yet been done, viz., Sir Harry Smith. He should like to recall to the House certain memorable words which were spoken by Sir Harry Smith. The Government of the day had urged upon Sir Harry Smith an arrangement of which he and the whole of the colonists disapproved. The colonists sent a deputation to Sir Harry Smith, and it happened that the deputation waited upon the Governor on the 18th of June. Although Sir Harry Smith agreed with the object of the deputation and the words in which they expressed it, he made them this reply:—

> "Gentlemen, this is the anniversary of Waterloo; for forty-three years I have served my Sovereign—I take pride in it—and I wish God Almighty may strike me dead before I disobey Her Majesty's Government."

He thought those words bespoke just by a little the higher spirit, just by a little, the nobler conception of public duty. But he acknowledged that to pass a vote of censure upon a man for a fault which he had frankly acknowledged was to make a mistake, especially when that man had laboured unsparingly through many anxious years in the service of the Crown, and must, whatever they might think of his policy or that of the Government which inaugurated it, take in the end a distinguished place in that distinguished body of public servants by whose zeal and devotion the greatness of this country had been fostered. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Hon. Members opposite applauded. But they could have very little to congratulate themselves upon when they looked back upon the night of that debate. Speech after speech was made declaring that the Amendment proposed by the Government was a base and cowardly one. Yet it was hon. Members opposite who insisted that this base and cowardly and pernicious Amendment should be inscribed upon the records of the House. It could hardly have been good for the Empire, in their eyes, that a base and cowardly Resolution referring to the Colonies should be carried by an enormous majority, yet it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham himself who rose to move that the "Question be now put," and insisted upon a division. Most of them had cherished a hope at the beginning of the session that some sort of neutral ground might be found upon which the two Parties might meet, but now that hope was certainly dead, and the only sort of agreement that he could conceive as possible was that which was best described in the words of the young lady who won a large prize at her girls' school by describing Platonic love as "a *rapprochement* where she does not know what it means and he does not mean it." He thought that few of the speeches which had been made from the opposite Benches could come under any definition of patriotism even in the ample volumes of the New English Dictionary, although they might figure as instances of the metaphorical use in the English language of the game of battledore and shuttlecock. He had one more word to say. For many years he had taken his pleasure in travelling in the more or less untravelled corners of the world, and he wished to place on record his belief that on the whole and in the sum, where the British flag had gone, there the races which came beneath its folds had enjoyed greater security for their property and greater well-being in their lives. It happened that once in that very troubled country which he trusted would get some relief from the Algeciras Conference, he came one afternoon to a fortified caravanserai in which it was prudent to sleep if one hankered after going on again in the morning. It was an hour before sunset, and during that hour, the caravans with their camels and their merchandise came crowding into the caravanserai there to pass the night. Just before sunset, while the gates were still open, there came out from the guard room at the end three Moorish soldiers, a drummer, a bugler, and one with a fife, and to his astonishment, and indeed to some feeling deeper than astonishment, there rang out suddenly the "Last Post," which for many years he had been accustomed to hear played beneath his window at night in the parade ground of Wellington barracks. The sound of that peculiarly English tune ringing out through the open gateway over the wild country and summoning those who were still without the caravanserai into its shelter and security, seemed to him then, and seemed now, to symbolise the ideal of British Governments in their dealings with their Colonies and the races which inhabited them. He believed that that ideal was still being followed out by His Majesty's Government to-day, and he should like very inefficiently to place upon record his very firm belief that the policy which was being followed by them would result in the ultimate benefit of the Colonies, and was at the same time in consonance with the highest traditions of the British race.

*LORD HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said he would not follow the right hon. Gentleman in the remarks he had made, but he would follow his example in not dealing with previous speeches which had been made in the acrimonious debates they had had upon subjects which this Vote raised. It would be easy to call attention to the action of the Government in proposing an Amendment to a vote of censure of which they were ashamed, and then endeavouring to get it talked out. It would be easy to call attention to the various forms of hypocrisy which had characterised the action of the Government in the past, but he did not intend to go into these matters. What he wanted the Committee to consider what was going to be the policy of the Government in South Africa in the future. After all, these acrimonious Party debates did not serve any useful purpose, and what they wanted to know was what the policy of the Government was going to be. In this House there was a Party, only a small Party, of extremists who believed sincerely, and always had believed, that the whole of the British policy in South Africa was wrong; that the war was wrong to start with; that it was unnecessary, and that the best thing that they could now do was to try and get back the country which had been the scene of these warlike operations to the condition it was in before the war. That extreme section of the House represented a certain proportion of opinion in the country, but there was a great danger that the views of that section would obtain far too much importance, not only here but in South Africa. The British settlers in South Africa might come to the conclusion that that section represented the views of the English people as a whole. Therefore it became necessary for those who were on the Unionist side of the House, who represented a large section of the population, and who represented even a certain amount of Liberal opinion on this subject, to point out that the real feeling of this country on this question did not disapprove of the war. He expressed the hope that the Government would clearly show that their policy was not influenced by the views of these extremists. He was afraid there was in South Africa at the present time a suspicion latent in the minds of the British population that the policy of the Government was indeed being influenced in that way. And that being so, he hoped in the course of the debate there would be some expression of opinion which would carry a message of hope, not so much to the Dutch as to the British population of South Africa. In connection with this, the question of land settlement in the Orange River Colony was of particular importance. If, as Lord Elgin recently said in the House of Lords, it was premature for him to say that no reservation should be made with regard to land settlement, how much more premature was the statement made at the beginning of the session that the Orange River Colony was to be at once given responsible government. He hoped the Government would not feel bound to persist in the policy of granting to the Orange River Colony immediate responsible government. When they had examined all the facts in the light of the knowledge they would acquire from the Commission sent out to South Africa, they would be perfectly justified in saying that the decision they had come to was premature and that they did not see their way to giving that responsible government which they had suggested. If the Government took that course those sitting on the Unionist side of the House would not blame them for inconsistency. They would be only too glad to see the right policy carried out. If the Government could not withdraw that statement, perhaps they would take into very serious consideration the possibility of reserving the question of land settlement for some time after responsible government was given to the Orange River Colony. It would be far better to make this reservation when giving responsible government than to give responsible government without any reservation, and then to find it necessary to interfere. Whether the opinion come to was right or wrong there was no doubt that a considerable section of the settlers in the Orange River Colony — the British colonists—felt in considerable danger. He hoped their fear was not justified and that whoever replied on behalf of the Government in this debate would send a word of encouragement to them and allay their fear. When they had regard to the letter of Mr. Cross which appeared on March 15th, and which said—

> "In 1881 you sold the men who fought for you. Are you going to sell us again,"

it showed how necessary it was for the Government to say something to relieve those fears and to take no course of action which should in the future give rise to any fear of that kind. With regard to the Commission of inquiry which had gone to South Africa, it seemed to him rather a pity that all the suggestions made to the Chairman in the letter addressed to him were suggestions to ascertain whether it was possible to do something to conciliate the Boers rather than to do something that should put the English settlers in a strong and impregnable position. There was no doubt that that letter gave rise to a considerable amount of apprehension in the minds of British settlers lest it was the intention of the British Government in the Constitution subsequently to be given not to give the British settlers the equal rights which they would naturally expect with the Dutch. They on the Opposition side of the House pleaded for the Constitution not on behalf of the magnates. He wished the magnates had not been brought into this question at all. He thought history would clear away the cobwebs of prejudice and ignorance in this matter, and would judge them by their work in South Africa when the magnates had been long forgotten. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies complained rather bitterly a day or two previously about the tone of the Press. He could sympathise with the hon. Gentleman, because it could not be pleasant to have the whole weight of the Government's policy in South Africa thrust on his shoulders. It could not be pleasant to be put in a more prominent position by the Press than the hon. Gentleman really occupied. He should regard the hon. Gentleman rathe as a messenger of the gods, rather as Mercury who had to obey the commands of Jove and Jupiter who nodded on Olympus and sometimes on the Treasury Bench. The weight of the responsibility lay not upon the hon. Gentleman but upon the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, notwithstanding what the malign and corrupt Press of this country might say. In the case of South Africa, and especially with regard to land settlement, he wished to know whether the Government were going to adopt a policy which would make the present British settlers disloyal, and drive them into the arms of the disloyal Dutch population, or whether they were going to adopt a policy which would gradually promote the fusion of the two races—a policy based on equal rights whereby the British population would be encouraged rather than the Dutch. It rested upon the Government to say whether in the future the colony was to be a loyal portion of the Empire, or whether it would be disloyal and anxious to cut itself adrift in a way that he hoped would never happen in one of our Colonies again.

*Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said he had put down a Motion to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State by £100 for the purpose of initiating a discussion on the same subject as that with which the noble Lord had just dealt, namely, the question of the land settlement, which had been strangely neglected in the course of the anomalous arrangements which had taken place in connection with South Africa recently. Whilst he was the last to underrate the importance of fostering the mining industry in South Africa, he believed the prosperity of South Africa depended to a much greater extent upon a united and loyal community of British and Dutch. At the best the mining industry was but a transitory feature of the history of that country. What had to be more considered was the permanent stability, which could only be realised by the establishment of a prosperous and contented community of British and Dutch working together. He desired to examine what had taken place with regard to British land settlement in these colonies in the past, and to elucidate from the Government what policy they intended to pursue in the immediate future The period between the annexation of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in 1900 and the termination of the war in May, 1902, presented a peculiarly advantageous time to prepare a complete scheme of land settlement. A scheme on a very large scale might have been promoted in these two colonies. Although there had been one in operation and a certain amount of good work had been done in that direction, the scheme was but a shadow as compared with the very large expense involved in bringing it about. He did not wish to ignore or under-estimate the great difficulties that presented themselves to those who were responsible for this work at the termination of the late war. They were various and numerous. There was always the difficulty of a judicious selection of settlers, and there was also the difficulty occasioned by the country having been laid bare by the long and devastating war. Large numbers of the Boer inhabitants had been exiled as prisoners of war to different parts of the world, and, of course, the first and most urgent duty at the expiration of the war was to repatriate those prisoners, replace them on the farms, and put them in a position to be able to obtain their livelihood. But the settlement of British settlers from this country and other parts of the Empire should have been a separate and distinct operation. He did not desire to approach this subject in any Party spirit. Party spirit had been far too rife in the discussions on South Africa, and, if anything permanently beneficial was to be done to the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in the future, it could only be done by the united efforts of both sides of the House. When the land settlement scheme was commenced a sum of £3,000,000 was allocated from the War Loan, and he gathered that something like £2,200,000 had been spent upon settlements in the two colonies. Of this amount £845,000 had been spent in the purchase of something like 1,100,000 acres in the Orange River Colony, and some 700 adult males, as the report termed them, had been placed on the land. Of these, 207 were South African born, 102 Dutch, and 391 were home and over-sea immigrants. Perhaps his hon. friend would be able to enlighten him, but it appeared that from the total sum a considerable amount had been spent, apart from the purchase, in placing these men on the land and in general administration. Probably something considerably over £1,000,000 had been spent in connection with land settlement. As a result, after four years less than 400 British over-sea settlers had been placed in the Orange River Colony. Without being hypercritical, and looking at the extreme importance of a land settlement scheme for that country, it did appear to be a very small result for the very large sum spent. But what was a matter of concern to those who looked upon British land settlement as important was the fact that during the past year there had been a practical cessation of immigration into the Orange River Colony. In all, only 120 men, women, and children, of which number only twenty-four were men had settled in the country during the past year. Yet the report said there were about 500,000 acres of undeveloped land on the western side available for purchase, and anyone acquainted with the subject knew perfectly well that any amount of land could be brought in the open market at a very small sum compared with that asked a few years ago. Was there a scarcity of applicants? The report said that to-day there were numbers of suitable applicants only waiting to come upon the land if land were put at their disposal—men who had farm implements and were in possession of a sufficient amount of capital, men who fought for the Crown in the late war, and the very men they would like to see upon the land. He had no desire to attack the late Government as regards this question, nor did he desire to argue whether the land had been allotted in unsuitable portions, although it did seem that a large amount of land had been allotted to a very few people. Fifteen thousand acres was considered the economic denomination for a profitable grazing farm, but anyone who knew the Orange River Colony knew that there were large tracts in that country which with irrigation could have been converted to other purposes than grazing, such as market gardening, and cereals of any kind. Had that been done it would have had the great advantage that it would not have necessitated anything like so large a tract of land being purchased by an individual, and much less capital would have been required. The colony in that case would carry a much larger population, which was one of the most important factors for the future prosperity of that colony. The presence of men of this character was of extreme political importance. There was to be representative government comparatively soon. He felt sure everyone would agree that the idea of gerrymandering the franchise so that preference should be given to the Briton or the Boer was one that was odious to them all. The establishment of a large community of British farmers working in harmony with Dutch neighbours and the mining community was the only true solution. He hoped that before the recently appointed Commission returned the Prime Minister would have seen his way to instruct the Commission to look into this question of land settlement as well, because it very closely touched the whole question of franchise in the future. He was not arguing for a moment the carrying out of any policy with a view to swamping the Boers in the colonies. There was no fear of that. There were 10,000 farms in the Orange River Colony, and at present only 2,000 were occupied by Englishmen. There was no fear of any policy the British Government might carry out swamping the Boers there, but a large proportion of Englishmen in the country was a valuable, and, he believed, an imperative factor in its future prosperity. He believed the Boers in their farm districts would welcome the advent of Englishmen as their neighbours. Wherever they went in South Africa and saw a community of farmers consisting of Boers and Englishmen, as he had often seen, they would invariably find that the land was being better cultivated; there was a higher standard of prosperity, and, in fact, the whole conditions of life were improved by the presence of Englishmen. Therefore, in speaking strongly on behalf of increasing the British population in the Orange River Colony, he did so in no antagonistic spirit to the Boers who were resident there. He would turn for a moment to the Transvaal, because the question there was as important as, if not more important than, in the Orange River Colony. In the Transvaal a British farming element was urgently needed as a healthy link between the Boers and the natives. Very important information was to be found in the Report of the Director of Land Settlement on the Transvaal. This volume contradicted the statement that the Transvaal was only suitable for the

Sir J. Dickson-Poynder.

mining industry and was not of any use for agricultural purposes, and it showed that in that country were to be found large tracts of land most useful for modern scientific agricultural purposes. It also proved that within the past three years with scientific methods the Transvaal had given satisfactory results. After a careful examination by experts of the agricultural capabilities and disabilities of the country, the same volume pointed out that immediate remedies could be found for those disabilities, to extinguish or mitigate diseases amongst cattle, to meet the difficulties caused by the periodical droughts, and all those natural pestilences which were so detrimental. There was available any amount of land of the very best quality which, with a little capital, could be made most productive. Up to 1903 there were practically no British settlers in the Transvaal, but there were now 600 established there at a cost of £600,000. Each of them owed the Government £1,000, and unless it was paid in the prescribed time the land would be forfeited. He hoped the Under-Secretary for the Colonies would vigorously prosecute the policy of land settlement during the months which would intervene between now and the establishment of the new constitution. The noble Lord the Member for Thirsk had made an allusion to those who were already settled on the land. Lord Milner seemed to be particularly anxious that those settled on the land should not run the risk of being treated arbitrarily by the new Transvaal Government when it was established. He would not go into the merits of that point. If there was any fear that there lingered in the minds of the Boers bitter memories of the past war which might find expression in a Government in which the Dutch element was strongly predominant, he hoped the Government would not flinch from putting every safeguard in the new constitution to preserve the rights of British settlers on the land and to prevent injustice being done to them. He would probably be met by the assertion that, after all, the only industry in the Transvaal of any importance was the mining industry. He utterly refused to accept that proposal. If that were true, then there certainly ought to have been no Boer War or any annexation of the Transvaal or the Orange River Colony, and those countries would be of very little use and, possibly, a great encumbrance to us in years to come. Those who had experience of colonisation he thought, would agree as a general proposition that no colony could remain an integral or loyal portion of the British Empire which was not capable of civilised occupation otherwise than in connection with mines. Therefore, he refused to accept the doctrine that the mines were the sole source of wealth in the Transvaal. The whole of the British Empire was a contradiction of that argument. In the year 1820 the difficulties of Cape Colony between the Boers and the British and the dangers which confronted both those peoples were overcome in the happiest possible way by a scheme of British land settlement. This House voted £50,000, and with this small sum of money no less than 5,000 English settlers went out to Delagoa Bay, and that nucleus of British population had done more to keep Cape Colony loyal and an integral portion of this Empire than anything else. The same story was to be found in Canada and in New Zealand. When New Zealand became a British colony the sum of £800,000 was expended upon a scheme of land settlement, and it could not be denied that that was the main nucleus of all the prosperity which had since taken place in that Colony. He asked his hon. friend not to reply that this policy could no longer be continued on vigorous lines because it cost too much money; it would have to be done if we were going to hold South Africa. We had spent £250,000,000 on the war, and wasted untold treasure for which, at the present time, there seemed to be very little prospect of any return. He thought that a small sum of money spent at this period would probably be the best investment of all. In view of the possible £3,000,000 surplus he was not going to ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies to request the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find more money for this purpose out of British taxation, because there were other ways in which the money could be found. The sum of £3,000,000 had been allotted already, and only £2,200,000 of that sum had been spent. Then there was the £35,000,000 loan. He understood that up to last July £28,000,000 had been spent, and so there remained another £1,000,00 unspent, and it could not be spent bette than upon a land settlement scheme There was also money owing to us from South Africa. The House had heard a great deal about the mines, but in spite of all the debates that had taken place, he expected that they would find that the output of gold in the Transvaal this year would be the biggest of all, although the mining shares had gone down. Then there was the sum of £30,000,000 owing to this country. He did not think it would be asking too much if we asked for an instalment, and that first instalment could not be allocated to a more useful or servicable purpose than a scheme of land settlement. He hoped they would hear more upon this question from other hon. Members. His hon. friend the Member for Gravesend, who took a somewhat hostile line occasionally on Colonial questions, had done some useful service in connection with one of those big Imperial associations which had been doing its best to promote land settlement. He invited his hon. friend to use all the influence he could with his colleagues to look upon this as one of the most important factors in the future prosperity of South Africa. The whole future of South Africa depended upon it, and if a scheme of land settlement was developed, the difficulties in regard to the mines and Chinese labour and all other wrangles would be forgotten. The establishment of a British population on the land, working in co-operation with the Boers and the natives, was the only foundation upon which South Africa could become a prosperous and contented portion of His Majesty's dominions.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said that he was glad to follow the hon. Baronet, because he wished to deal with the same subject, and he was in agreement with much that he had said with regard to land settlement. He desired to direct the attention of the Committee especially to that point which had been incidentally touched on by the hon. baronet, but not to an extent equal to its importance, namely, irrigation. He believed not only that irrigation was essential to any satisfactory scheme of land settlement, but that it supplied a real solution of the South African problem in its economic, political, and imperial aspect. That perhaps was a large order; but he would make his reasons clear before he sat down. He had always regretted that at the time when the repatriation of the Boers took place after the war, and some sort of project of land settlement was initiated, a far larger scheme with regard to the latter was not undertaken. The country was in a generous mood, and willing to secure permanently the results of the war, which had cost so much money and so many lives. This could have been done by adopting as a basis for such a scheme the plan of the distinguished irrigation expert from Egypt, who examined the whole country and embodied his conclusions in a Report which was thrilling reading to anyone from whose mind economic considerations did not banish all sentiment. The sum total of Mr. Wilcox's Report was that South Africa might, by irrigation, be converted into the granary of the world.

He would venture to trouble the Committee with some experience of his own, which constituted his claim to address them on the subject. For ten years he had been engaged in an irrigation project in the North West Territory of Canada —a project that was now recognised by the Canadian Government as of great importance to the country, and as forming the cradle of a new population for that vast and hitherto thinly inhabited area. From this experience he could put the financial question in a nutshell. Land, of which they had a quantity, and which they could not sell at half-a-dollar an acre, they had from the first been selling for from £10 to £15 per acre. It cost three dollars an acre to irrigate it. The population of as yet a very limited area was now increasing by thousands. They had a problem before them similar in its main features to that existing in South Africa. It was true that there were none of those political or imperial aspects involved in it which made the problem infinitely more pressing in the latter country. It was also true that the physical features were different, and that those existing in South Africa were of such a nature as to make it imperative that any large scheme of irrigation should be undertaken on the same scale as in India, and Egypt and America, and as had been laid down as a condition for South Africa in the brilliant and comprehensive Report of Mr. Wilcox. They had a vast expanse of land useless for purposes of cultivation and practically uninhabited. Some of it could be used as ranch land in blocks of 30,000 or 50,000 acres or more, employing here and there a superintendent and a few cowboys. But there was no cultivation and no population. By the introduction of water they had converted it into a country where a farmer could live and grow prosperous on 150 acres of land. The same conditions existed in South Africa; the same beneficent change could be made there. What was more important, the same security would exist for the repayment of the capital to the central authority, which in that case would be the State. In the United States the Federal authority supplied great sums of money to the State authority, who in turn expended it on irrigation and received the instalments from the colonists and thus repaid the Federal treasury.

There were many other points of similarity between the two cases, but he would only mention one more. They built their canal by the labour of those they intended to settle there. During the work of construction they paid them a living wage. But they paid them the rest in land on which they settled. He called the attention of those interested in what was called the "poor white question' in South Africa to this process. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India had stated that the coloured man in South Africa was "deemed a necessary part of the economic machinery of the country, whether for mining or for manufacturing, for tillage or for ranching." He did not altogether like to hear human labour called a part of the machinery of production, although that statement was economically accurate. But in such a case as this, when the workers had the prospect of settlement and independence before them, and every day's labour would bring them nearer to the possession of a home of their own, he believed that the whites of South Africa would not be averse to such labour.

It might be true that the time had passed for dealing with the question of irrigation in South Africa on a scale commensurate with the needs of the country, its illimitable arid wastes, with untold fertility and natural wealth buried below the surface, and only wanting water to bring it forth, and the hand of man to materialise it; its great rivers running slack in deep ditches for ten months of the year, but running the other two months in mighty volume, of which only a hundreth part needed to be saved to irrigate the whole country; its physical features in many parts suited to the formation of vast reservoirs which would make men independent of nature's niggard provision during the greater part of the year. To deal with such a question comprehensively would be a splendid mission for the Liberal Party, for it would people South Africa with the British race by means economically sound and remunerative to the State. But the policy of irrigation might be adopted on a smaller scale of dams and well-sinking—with the £3,000,000 or such additions to it as the hon. Baronet had suggested, and the money would always be coming back and could be laid out again in the same way. Irrigation would change the face of the country wherever it was applied. It would change it from a country where 5,000 acres were needed to support a single farmer to a country where a settler and his family could live and prosper on 150 acres; from a country where land was worth £1 an acre to a country where land would be worth from £30 to £100 per acre; from a country thinly inhabited, in many parts not inhabited at all, to a country which would carry ten times the population, and keep them prosperous and thriving; from a country suited only to a scattered Boer population to a country suited to a British population. At present there was no agriculture worth the name in South Africa except those portions which had been already subjected to some form of irrigation, however imperfect. There was, at least in the Transvaal, a great industrial population and hardly any pursuit of agriculture by cultivation. Even maize, the food of the natives, their chief product, had to be imported in large quantities. The hon. Baronet, in speaking of the mining industry, seemed to imply—and he looked towards the Opposition Benches—that someone had stated that the mining industry was the only industry in South Africa. He did not know where that statement came from. It was quite true that at the present time, and for many years to come, it would be by far the most important industry; and that all other industries in which white labour especially was engaged were dependent upon it. Even this very industry of agriculture was dependent on the mining population to take its products; and in proportion as they injured the prosperity of the mining industry they not only lessened the employment of white men in that industry, but in all the other industries which employed white men only. There were different opinions as to the life of the mining industry. One said that it would only last twenty-five years, another said 100 years. He was not inclined to believe that there was any limit of that sort to be placed on the metalliferous wealth of South Africa. There was a vast amount of mineral wealth yet untouched—vast areas of low grade ore which it did not pay to work under the Boer Government, but which could be worked under the less onerous conditions that now prevailed. But even if the time came when the mining industry should dwindle and eventually disappear, the mining industry would have done its work for the agricultural industry, and an adequate policy of irrigation would, in the words of Mr. Wilcox, "have put its agricultural wealth on such a solid basis that the country would not have to fall from the height of prosperity to the depth of poverty." So far he had spoken only of the economic aspect of the question. He desired to deal with the other aspect which the hon. Baronet had only touched on in guarded terms, but which he would treat more frankly. He did not disguise that such a scheme would tend very largely to increase the British and pro-British population of South Africa. He had not the slightest desire to propose any exclusion of the Boers. But the Boers did not care to cultivate the land. In the Orange River Colony the Boers had only taken 100 farms while the British had taken 600 under the Land Settlement Scheme. That was because these were farms requiring cultivation. That would be far more the case with irrigable farms which necessitated that sort of agricultural labour to which the British colonist was peculiarly suited. A Boer with a farm of 5,000 or 10,000 acres would only till twenty or thirty acres of it. They were a pastoral people. The British colonist lived by working the land. It would be the same with the sons of the loyal South African colonist, so many of whom fought in the war. If they opened the land of South Africa to this sort of colonisation, it would be those people, and not the Boers, who would occupy the irrigated farms and around whom families would grow up British in race, in character, and loyalty. Was that a result to be ashamed of? What was all the talk they had heard about "packing" the country with a British population? Why should not they settle a British population there if there was an overflow of British strength and fibre in this country or in South Africa to be dealt with? What did that sort of contention mean? It meant that they who were ready to pursue an Imperial project—the securing the South African Colonies—by means of a war which cost thousands of lives and millions of money, were doing something shameful and reprehensible if they continued to pursue that object by an economic process which could stand on its own basis and which would be of inestimable benefit to South Africa. They were going to give self-government to these Colonies. Every question great and small would then have to be decided by the majority at the polls. What about the racial question? They would be blind if they did not consider the possibility of the racial question supplying the political line of cleavage in the future as it had done in the past. In that case what would be the position of South Africa when they had given it self-government, if there was a Dutch majority? South Africa would go. This country could not oppose the decision of popular opinion in the Colonies concerned. There had been, happily, only one case in our colonial history where popular opinion had decided in favour of separation from the Mother Country, and in that case popular opinion conquered. The American Colonies seceded. They did not want that to happen in South Africa. He could assure the Committee that he did not wish to treat this question on the lines of Party divisions in this country. In this matter there must be a new division of Parties. There must be two camps; one, those who were on the side of South Africa remaining a part of the British Empire; the other, those who were against it. By the light of that division all these South African questions must be viewed, and whatever accusations they might bring against the Party opposite for their treatment of those questions, he for one did not believe that there would be any considerable section of opinion in the country in favour of separation or of any steps that would lead to it.

MR. PAUL (Nottingham) said he desired to call attention to the very serious announcement made that afternoon by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. In answer to a Question, that hon. Gentleman stated that martial law still prevailed in the Colony of Natal, and that he saw no reason why it should speedily come to an end. Hon. Gentlemen were too well informed to suppose that martial law was necessary for putting down armed rebellion. It was part of the common law of this country, and of every part of the King's dominions, that an armed rising might be put down by force not only by the regular forces and by the Militia, but by any loyal subject of the Crown. Martial law applied only to the punishment of offenders. He was not going to defend Lord Elgin and his attempt to rescue the twelve natives of Natal who were executed the other day. He believed that very few hon. Gentlemen were in favour of abolishing the Imperial veto, but those who were, whether they knew it or not, were marching to the disruption and disintegration of the Empire. If they abrogated the right of Imperial control, the Empire itself would cease to exist. That was almost a verbal proposition, but at any rate it was one which nobody out of Bedlam would attempt to deny. If Lord Elgin had not insisted in staying the execution of those twelve natives until he knew the reason why, removal from office would have been totally inadequate as punishment for the offence. There remained the much more serious question as to whether Lord Elgin should have allowed the execution of those natives. He was not going to attack the Government of Natal. It did not consist of archangels, but of mortal, fallible men like ourselves. They were anxious to do right, but liable to go wrong. They were men possessed of the same prejudices and passions as our own. Was any hon. Gentleman absolutely certain that every one of those natives was guilty of the murder of which he was accused? He was well aware that the evidence had been examined by the Attorney-General of Natal; that the Government had approved of it—and they must all admire the wisdom and capability shown by Sir Henry M'Callum throughout those proceedings. Courts martial were not the only tribunals which made mistakes. There was nothing more dangerous than trying men in batches. Some of the natives might have been guilty of murder; the majority of them might have had no defence; but there might have been one single man who was innocent. Hon. Gentlemen opposite for Ireland might have in their minds the case of the men who were known as the Manchester martyrs. He was not allowed to discuss the question of whether the title of "Manchester Martyrs" was just or not, as it was foreign to the issue before the House. Three men were executed for the murder, although five men were convicted. One man was released on the ground that he had no arms in his possession, but really he thought because he was an American citizen. The remaining man had no more to do with the murder than the judges on the bench. He was not a Fenian, and he was at home in his own house at the time of the murder. Yet the jury unanimously found him guilty. That was not a court-martial. There were on the bench two of the most learned and able judges of the land. And how was M'Guire's innocence discovered? Because some reporters for the Press were in court, and were so impressed by the evidence given in his favour that they addressed a petition to the Home Secretary, and so M'Guire was pardoned, and, being a Marine, went back to the service of the country. In the case of the court-martial at Natal there were not five men, but twelve men on trial. It was on record that the Governor first told his Ministers that the proper course was to bring these men before the ordinary courts, but in deference to the opinion of his Ministers he gave way. He asked the Committee most seriously to consider the great and crucial question whether in such circumstances, even in a self-governing Colony, the Governor was bound to yield to the advice of his Ministers. He put that point with all the more readiness because it was the point taken in *The Times* that morning by his distinguished friend Sir Frederick Pollock, who was, what he was not, a constitutional authority. A Governor was bound by the advice of the Minister in legal and political matters, but not when they gave him advice to go beyond the law. Martial law had never been proclaimed in this country since the Petition of Right became a statute of the realm in 1629. Not even in the civil war between the King and the Parliament, not even in the Revolution of 1688, not even in the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 was martial law proclaimed—never, never, never!

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Except in Ireland.

MR. PAUL said it was applied in Ireland in 1833, but it was applied by Act of Parliament. No one denied that Parliament could do anything which was physically possible. But it had been laid down by one of the most distinguished men who had ever occupied the position of Lord Chief Justice of England that there was no authority short of the Legislature which could apply martial law in any part of the King's dominions. In the case of Jamaica, with which he was dealing, Lord Chief Justice Cockburn said there was a local statute which empowered Governor Eyre for a limited time to do what he did do. He should like to know whether there was such a statute in Natal, and, if not, who gave the Governor authority to proclaim martial law. If it had never been necessary in this country, it was a strange thing that it should be found necessary in a small colony defended by a large force of British troops provided by this country, and paid for by this House. He hoped they would have a little more light upon this point. He might remind his hon. friend of another case of martial law in Ireland, that in regard to Wolfe Tone in 1798, when there was a much more dangerous revolution in Ireland than there ever had been since. Wolfe Tone was an active rebel acting with soldiers from France; he was taken red handed and was brought before a military court. His counsel applied to the High Court for a rule to stay the proceedings, and the judges ordered that even under those circumstances the case should be brought before them, and the rule would have been made absolute if Wolfe Tone had not cut his own throat in prison. He did not believe that there was a member of this Committee, however learned, who could quote a single case where martial law had been held to be legal in this country at any time since the Petition of Right. The hon. Member for Thirsk had said that acrimonious Parliamentary debates did no good, and that what they wanted was information about the policy of the Government. He had done his best to avoid the one, and was doing his best to procure the other. Why should this be made a Party question at all? Hon. Gentlemen opposite had shown themselves just as zealous for the rights of the native races as any one on the Liberal side. They could all make political speeches when they liked, but why bring the British Empire into the melting-pot? Surely the time was arrived when they all, at least before dinner, might take the greatness of the British Empire for granted. But there was something greater than the greatness of the British Empire with its splendid and manifold resources. The sensual idolatry of mere size was not a very lofty faith. But what was greater than the Empire itself, or even of any material thing, was the knowledge, the conviction, the assurance that there were at the heart of the Empire, in London, statesmen who were wise and brave enough to protect the subjects of his Majesty, of whatever class or creed or colour, from tyranny or oppression, from injustice or wrong.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he agreed with every word that had fallen from his hon. friend, who in language more natural and picturesque than he could employ had referred to a matter to which he intended to allude. As he listened to the debate, one scene was in his mind and one only. It laid upon him as a nightmare. It was the scene which took place in Natal on Monday. He saw as plainly as possible the firing party; he saw the men who were shot down, the pits in which they were to be buried, and he saw the coloured men forced up from district to district to see their own kith and kin put to death. He believed that these men, whatever their colour, were made in the image of God, and he must speak out what he thought. He was a somewhat enthusiastic student of history, and his sense of horror at these proceedings was only equalled by what he felt when he imagined the scenes which took place in Ireland in 1798. The sentence of a court-martial law was not a legal sentence in itself, and when he thought this matter over he remembered the letter written by Lord Cornwallis to his bosom friend

General Ross, in which he described the devilry which went on in Ireland. Lord Cornwallis said he was surrounded, even at his own table, by people who rejoiced in blood and in gibbetings, hangings and death. He asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies to take note of the fact —he spoke subject to correction by the great authorities and especially the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, who was one of the greatest authorities in these matters— that a Colonial Government was dismissible and removable without any reason being assigned—absolutely dismissible at the will of the Governor-General. What was the position of Sir Henry McCallum. A Colonial Governor's term of office was generally conceded to be four or five years. Never was the term of the office extended beyond five years unless there was some special reason for it. If hon. Members would look at the date of the appointment of Sir Henry McCallum as Governor-General of Natal, they would see it was 1900. Why was he kept so long in this appointment? He (Mr. MacNeill) did not wish to say anything disagreeable about anybody. Lord Milner was in town and would correct him if he was wrong, but his recollection was that when the letter of Lord Milner, in which he desired unofficially that the Cape Constitution should be suspended, was written it was directed to Sir Henry McCallum. It would be far better, he thought, for a Governor to be a man who had not taken a great part in the warfare in what might be called the arena of politics. Sir Henry McCallum had been engaged before in matters which had brought him into conflict with the native races. He had been at the head of several punitive expeditions before he became Governor of Natal. They all knew what a punitive expedition meant. Sir Henry McCallum had now been Governor beyond the allotted term, and what the House wanted to know was why it was. In 1902, during the peace negotiations, Sir Henry McCallum, who had then been two years Governor in Natal, made in a place which was the centre of this disturbance, Greytown, a speech calculated to destroy the peace negotiations, and to which attention was drawn in this House on September 5th, 1902. He did not think Sir Henry McCallum was the best man to be put into the position of Governor of Natal when there was a contest between the white population on the one side and the black population on the other. There was one other matter, and this he thought was the most serious matter of all, and one to which the attention of Lord Elgin should be directed. Sir Henry McCallum had said that he was in favour of having these twelve men tried by the Civil Courts, but that he had yielded to the advice of his Ministers, and had had these men tried by court-martial. Sir Henry McCallum had no constitutional right to yield in that way to the advice of his Ministers. Sir Henry McCallum here was an Imperial servant, he was Commander-in-Chief of the forces, and in a case like this it was his bounden duty to read the instructions which were published for the use of every Colonial Governor, which stated that though a Governor might seek the advice of his Ministers he was bound to come to his own decision whatever that decision might be. If hon. Members would consult "Todd," one of the greatest constitutional colonial authorities after Sir Erskine May, they would find he said that in general criminal cases the Governor-General need not refer to the Home Government—

> "But His Majesty's Government will be ready to afford any information, instruction, and advice, for which a Governor may think it necessary to apply when there is a question arising in a question of criminal procedure."

Could there have been a more special occasion than this for invoking the assistance of the Home Government? Here was martial law established by him at the desire of the Cape Ministry. He was at the head of the military forces. He was Governor of the Colony. Why did he not telegraph to the King's Government for instructions? Nothing was known of this court-martial until the sentence was passed, and then they knew that twelve men had been sentenced to death. Why was not the Imperial Government put into possession of these facts? Sir Henry McCallum, in a case of this kind, must be regarded as a distinct entity from "the Governor of Natal." He was an Imperial Officer, he was the servant of the Imperial Government, the servant of this House and hon. Members of this House who, in their turn, were the servants of the people of this country, were indirectly responsible for all the martial law that went on in South Africa. There must be no mistake about that, no sheltering behind the Cape Ministry. The hon. Member for Gravesend had given an interesting and accurate description of the powers vested in the Colonial Governor. Among others was the prerogative of mercy. The prerogative was exercised by the Crown in this country very little differently from the way in which it was exercised in the Colonies. Here it was exercised by the Crown through the Home Secretary on the advice of Ministers. A Colonial Governor took the advice of his Executive Council, he was bound to hear them, but the exercise of the prerogative of mercy depended not upon their advice but upon the decision at which the Governor had arrived upon his own responsibility as an Imperial officer. That was stated most clearly in a speech by Lord Carnarvon on April 14th, 1878. His hon. friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies ought to be a very proud and happy man to-day; he had been for nearly an hour censured by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. If the right hon. Gentleman only gave him (Mr. MacNiell) his censure he would regard it as the very highest praise. The right hon. Gentleman had exhibited an extreme jealousy of the rights of self-government in Natal, but though he trusted the people there he would not trust His Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of His Majesty's Government as suspect in this question of Natal. There seemed to be an hereditary flavour about this. "Oh," the right hon. Gentleman seemed to say, "if I only had a great Kilmainham compound in which to confine them, and give them a judicious dose of buckshot." But even a man who claimed omniscience, and who seemed every day to be congratulating the Almighty for having produced such an intellect, made a mistake which might be corrected by Arnold-Forster's "Easy Lessons in History." The right hon. Gentleman had said that the constitution of Natal—and there was a tremor in his voice when he mentioned the constitution; he seemed to be a sort of twentieth century Edmund Burke—could not be touched. The right hon. Gentleman was as wrong as he ought to be. The Constitution of Natal was granted, as they knew, in July, 1893. The last Gladstone Administration was in, and it was granted, curiously enough, not by Statute but by Letters Patent, and consequently it could be revoked. If Natal had been a Crown Colony administered justly and wisely by the mother-country this matter would never have occurred. Let them only regard it from the point of view of statistics. Natal had 97,000 inhabitants of European races and 1,097,000 of coloured races. The former had been given responsible government. In the history of the Colonial Office it used to be the regular practice that when on the one side there was an enormous population of coloured people not yet educated in the principles of liberty, and on the other side a small white population, the government should be that of a Crown Colony. The reverse had been tried in Natal and nowhere else in the whole history of the British Colonies. With the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, the old representative assemblies were immediately and rightly abolished and a Crown Colony substituted, because there was the absolute necessity of the Imperial Government to defend the blacks as against the whites, and protect the whites as against the blacks, and a better system of government resulted. But in Natal exactly the reverse had happened, and there was a sharp and bitter controversy between the whites and the blacks, and there was a Ministry dependent on our money and troops telling His Majesty's Government that they themselves should decide whether there should be any black men executed. That was a state of things which demanded a considerable manifestation of firm power by the British Parliament. He had not spoken in a Party sense. He spoke as a Member belonging to neither of the great Parties of the State, and one who cared not, except that it affected Ireland in a very modified degree, for the British Empire, but who did feel that so long as he was a Member of this House that he was doing good, not for his own country alone, but for all persons to whom the feelings, thoughts, and aspirations of humanity were dear, in endeavouring as far as he could to check bloodshed, and to establish peace and concord in every realm in the King's dominions.

*MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) said he desired to urge upon the Government the necessity for some definite declaration with regard to Chinese labour in the Transvaal. He must reiterate an argument which he used when he had first the honour of speaking in this House. Members were in the House of Commons, he took it, because there was such a thing as the British Constitution. They were here because by a long established custom the mass of English people required to govern themselves, and they were the mouthpiece of the English people in the country. If they were not that then there was no particular reason for their being where they were. There was no doubt that, more important even than the question of dear food, as an actual turning-point of individual elections last January, was the question of whether Chinese labour should or should not remain licensed by us in South Africa. There were very few Members returned after hostile contests who could say that that was not the case. It was their business to obey the mandate of the English people in this matter. Very often the electors differed profoundly on many points from the private opinions of their representatives. But here the views of both were very strong. The electorate had declared themselves pretty strongly in regard to the taxation of food, but they had expressed themselves equally strongly upon Chinese labour in South Africa. Whether the introduction of Chinese labour in South Africa was a wise or unwise thing hon. Members had been returned as the servants of the electors and the Government existed only to do their will. But let them for a moment leave aside the argument as to the folly of the electorate, and let them consider whether there were not arguments which any reasonable and quiet man could urge upon this question. Were there no arguments which a reasonable man who desired to do good in his country and not be precipitate, could find? Had the conscience of the people been mis-informed, or had the common sense of the people a good and rational basis when at the last election they determined that Chinese labour should come to an end? They had. For the first time since the industrial revolution capital had been permitted to transfer labour mechanically in large quantities from a place to which it was not native to a place where it was artificial and foreign, and to a country which was not tropical. The English people were determined that the Chinese should go from South Africa. Those for whom he spoke regarded the action of the Government on this matter as unsatisfactory and incomplete. Supposing that the English people were right. What would take place? He did not wish to weary the House with stale facts, but they all knew that it was a little group of rich men who decided that as this country had fought a difficult and expensive war for them, they would take advantage of it by lowering the wages of the Kaffirs. They then found, as would be found anywhere where forced labour did not exist, that if they lowered wages suddenly there would come what was called a deficiency in the supply of labour. The mineowners lowered wages by some 25 per cent. upwards. If there was any large employer of labour in the House who cared to lower wages 25 per cent. upwards arbitrarily, he thought he would find a deficiency in the supply of labour very quickly, and then he would begin to understand the situation in South Africa. Immediately wages were lowered in 1902 there began what they had experienced before the Jameson Raid and before the war. A policy was started in those little offices which he knew himself, and of which he could give the addresses in London; places where they displayed a large map of South Africa marked out in yellow and black, and the people in these offices began to whisper about Chinese labour. He remembered at an election in Dulwich a gentleman standing as a candidate for the love of his country who said he would never dream of such a thing as Chinese labour. It was said also that no Chinaman would be paid less than 2s. a day, and so they proceeded to pay him 1s. per day, and the thing followed its regular course. That was the usual procedure and the usual state of things in South African phenomena. They had now arrived at that stage when the English people were in the mood to demand that something should be done, and they had returned hon. Members to this House largely to put an end to Chinese labour. There they were on the 5th April, and nothing whatsoever had been done in this matter of Chinese labour. What could be done? There was a policy which it seemed to him was not extravagant or unwise. He thought it would be quite possible for His Majesty's Government to say that by a certain date—say three months hence—an earnest should be given of the intentions of the Government by sending the first batch of these men back to China. They could make the number small if they liked, and he would suggest that the first batch should consist of 1,000 Chinamen, who could easily be replaced by native labour. After that they could declare the rate at which the deportation should continue, and he would suggest that the rate should be 3,000 a month. If those two principles were laid down the country would know that the Government were doing something. Would there be an economic disaster if this policy were followed? Certainly not, because there was an ample supply of black labour if the rate of wages paid before the war was restored. At the rate of 3,000 Chinamen per month returning to their own country, it would take eighteen months to get all of them back again, and they could replace them at the same rate by native labour. These Chinamen were retained simply and solely because the wealthy class were afraid that if the Chinamen were taken away it would make them a little less wealthy. He asked from the Government some declaration as to whether they would not go further than they had done, because all they had done so far was to make a very vague declaration that when any mineowner chose to make it uncomfortable for a body of Chinamen, they could get them sent back to China at our expense. In conclusion, he said that if the policy of the Government remained as it was, there was no course left to those who had given definite pledges upon this question but to take the sense of the House upon it.

*Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) said he thought it was time that both sides of the House set themselves to work in order to see whether they could formulate some line of policy upon which they could all agree in order to settle this very thorny and difficult problem. During the late war in South Africa the vast majority of the people in this country, whether they agreed or disagreed with the policy which led up to that war, gave their hearty support to the Government of the country in carrying the war through, because they considered it was the duty of all to support the Government and see the war carried through to a successful conclusion. They spent an immense amount of money, and many thousands of valuable lives were lost, and the consequence was that the British flag was now flying over those new Colonies in South Africa. He thought they ought to be very careful what they said upon this question on both sides of the House, in order that the interests of the people in those new Colonies should not be injuriously affected. They must look forward to the settlement of that question with anxiety and well weigh their words. It was very unfortunate that political Parties were divided so much on racial lines—the Dutchman on the one side and the Englishman on the other. Indeed, the division was carried further, because it was practically a division of the towns against the country districts. It was to be hoped that if the country was to work out its own salvation, those racial lines might be obliterated, and that the two races might work together for the benefit of South Africa and to maintain the British connection. In the Dutch they had a nation against which any country might be proud to have fought, because a more tenacious and upright nation did not exist. Now that they were British subjects, let the people of the country do all they could to make them loyal. Naturally among the Dutch in South Africa there were a number who did not wish the English connection and who wished for an Afrikander republic. To his mind the vast majority of Dutch were more or less indifferent what flag they lived under. They were perfectly content to live under the English flag if only they received the treatment which they considered was their due. To balance the extreme party on the Dutch side, they in England must do all they could to stimulate the loyalty of English settlers in that country. If they did that, they would more than balance the hostile element in the Dutch population, and they might look forward with confidence to the future of South Africa. In his opinion the sooner responsible government was given to the Transvaal the better, but on the lines of one vote one value. Things had come to a pass in the Transvaal that the knot could only be cut by giving them responsible government at the earliest possible opportunity after the conditions on which the constitution should be given had been ascertained. There was not the same urgent necessity in the case of the Orange River Colony. In that Colony there was not the same pressing need for the solution of the labour difficulty. There were no mines there to speak of; it was a pastoral country. There was a scheme going on in that Colony which it would be unwise to take out of the hands of the Imperial authority at so early a date. He wished to impress on the Under-Secretary for the Colonies the fact that the question of giving responsible Government to the Orange River Colony would not have come up for settlement if it had not happened that that Colony was geographically situated next to the Transvaal. What was the key of the situation, both economic and political, in South Africa? It seemed to him that it all centred on the prosperity of the Rand, and the working of the gold mines, because unless there was a large white population, the farmers of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony would not be able to dispose of their produce. The prosperity of the Transvaal depended upon an unlimited supply of unskilled labour. On the subject of Chinese labour he would like to make an appeal to hon. Members in all parts of the House. It was a subject to which they should refer a little less frequently. Virtue had been its own reward in the case of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They had been returned in large numbers in consequence of the use made of Chinese labour; and therefore, as they had gained what they wanted, he saw little use in going on talking about it. The Party to which he belonged had suffered heavily owing to what they considered misrepresentations on the question of Chinese labour at the general election. They had made their protest, and he thought there was no good to be gained by harping on the subject. It was doing harm in South Africa and no good in this country. The question of Chinese labour in South Africa should be left to the free and unfettered decision of the Transvaal when it got responsible government. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] He would tell the hon. Member. Because he thought it was a matter which concerned the Transvaal and not us. It had been said that the working men who would be a large majority of the voters on the Rand would be under the thumb of the mining magnates, and that they would vote for a continuance of Chinese labour. He could not agree with that. The working men of this country had shown at the last general election that they could vote independently. Why should a working man, because he went to settle in Johannesburg, lose any of the independent characteristics he had in this country and vote at the bidding of the men who paid him his wages? If this matter were left entirely to the decision of the people of the Transvaal when they got self-government he was sure it would be for the good of South Africa. In the same way the decision about native questions ought to be left, as far as possible, to the responsible authorities in South Africa. After all, why should Englishmen and Englishwomen, when they emigrated from their country, leave behind all the kindly feelings and humane instincts which characterised them here, and become people who, according to some of the speeches which had been made, had no feeling for the native inhabitants at all? He was sure these speeches must give great pain to the white inhabitants of South Africa, both Boer and Briton. They ought to be able to trust their white brethren, be they Boers or Britons, in South Africa to treat the black races properly. On both sides of the House they should try to agree upon some policy for the good of South Africa. He looked forward to the time at no distant date when South Africa would be federated together under the British flag, loyal to the King and to the connection with this country—a federation which would add not only to the dignity but to the strength of the Empire.

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he had been surprised to notice the extraordinary zeal for self-government now professed by the other side of the House. He remembered the time, not very many years ago, when those hon. Gentlemen or their predecessors in the Unionist Party, were agitating in the Press and elsewhere for depriving Cape Colony, which was a much larger Colony than Natal, of self-government. If that was considered tolerable then, why should they denounce now even a hint that Natal had been a little prematurely endowed with self-government. The right hon. Member for Croydon, in his somewhat provocative speech, had said that Natal had been sneered at for having a small population. There was no question of sneering. It was a question of noting facts. The right hon. Gentleman said that New Amsterdam (now New York) had a small population a couple of hundred years ago. Yes, but when Natal had the population which New York now had she would be entitled to more attention than now. For, after all, size was of importance in this regard. He had been trying to find a few constituencies in England which had a population comparable to that of Natal in order to put the case fairly. The population of West Ham was nearly three times that of Natal. He meant the white population of Natal. There was a great deal of cant talked about the rights of the self-governing Colonies. After all, men did not become archangels when they left Great Britain and settled in the Colonies. They were no better than the average man in this country. He would assume that the people in Natal were as good as the people in West Ham. But supposing there was a quarrel between His Majesty's Government and the Town Council of West Ham, and that the town council resigned, everyone in this House would say, "Let them resign." After all, the British Empire could get on without either West Ham or Natal. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh."] We were not dependent as an Empire on the wishes of the Government of Natal, which was virtually equivalent to the Town Council of West Ham. [OPPOSITION cries of Oh, oh."] There was the same type of man in the two councils, and it was perfectly right that both should be judged comparatively. Why should this small white population in Natal, in the name of self-government, be empowered, with the aid of British troops, to impose whatever taxes it chose on the large body of the native people in Natal? That was a doctrine which ought to be resented by every Party in this House when they remembered that they owed their privileges to the fact that their ancestors resisted taxation by the Crown. Nobody assumed that the natives in Natal were the intellectual equals of the whites; but they had sufficient intelligence to know when they were taxed. After all, they were human beings like ourselves. There was a good deal of glib talk about the self-governing Colonies; but it should be remembered that there were 400,000,000 of people in the British Empire and only 52,000,000 were white. We could not hold that enormous coloured population unless we treated them fairly. The real Empire to-day was Great Britain and India. The only portions of the Empire which subscribed anything worth speaking of to the defence of the Empire were the United Kingdom and India. All the rest of the Empire was dependent for its defence on the taxpayers of this country and India. The poorest peasants in India and in Ireland were paying taxes to-day in order to defend rich men in the Transvaal and Natal. Australia was absolutely dependent for its defence on this country, for it was well known that the Australian squadron added no strength to the British Navy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. We are discussing the Colonial Vote.

*MR. HAROLD COX: Surely, in regard to the Colonial Office Vote, I am justified in referring to the defence of Australia.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Colonial Office does not deal with the Australian squadron.

*MR. HAROLD COX said he would not argue the point. He merely wished to say that Australia was dependent on this country for its defence. Without the British fleet Australia would be at the mercy of any great maritime Power. In Natal the colonists were not only dependent on this country for external defence, but for the maintenance of internal order; and yet, when this Government asked for information in regard to a particular important matter, there was a talk in Natal of "cutting the painter." He would ask was there no English disloyalty in South Africa? Was it not disloyal to threaten to "cut the painter" directly the Imperial Government interfered? The first thing this country should do was to require the Colonies to pay for their own defence. Self-government without self-defence was a mockery. In addition we were entitled to insist that the honour of our flag belonged to us, and we had a right to demand that the Colonies should do nothing which disgraced that flag. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham had made a great point of sneering at the moral sense of the mother country. Did he propose that we should always accept the moral sense of the Colonies? In the eighteenth century the West Indian Colonies were practically autonomous, and the legislatures of Jamaica passed a law which relieved of all penalty a planter who unintentionally flogged a slave to death, but if he intentionally flogged the slave to death, the planter was only to be fined £10. Did the Opposition think that in such a case as that they should be absolutely silent? He would take another case. In 1832 the Jamaica legislature twice refused to abolish the public flogging of women. He had no desire to depreciate the Colonies in any way, but in many ways their ideals differed from ours. It was for them to decide whether they would adapt their ideals to ours. He could imagine no grander conception than a free federation of sister states each bearing its part in the common burden; but if ever that was to be realised, it could only be by our having the candour to tell the Colonies frankly that they must bear their portion of the common burden, and that they must be willing to accept as their rule of conduct that central principle of equal justice between man and man, which was the very basis of the British Empire.

*MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) said the hon. Member for Preston had given the Committee some criticism in regard to the constitutional question in Natal, and had compared the present Government of that Colony with the town council of West Ham. He thought, however, that even the hon. Member for Preston would admit that if the town council of West Ham were face to face with a problem involving the disaffection of some 900,000 Zulus, and with the fact that if the situation was mishandled the disaffection might spread to many other millions of Zulus, the Government would be justified in thinking that it was an important matter whether West Ham should be deprived of its freedom of action or not. He would not attempt to follow the hon. Member into the maze of his extraordinary arguments in regard to Colonial defence, because he did not think anyone entirely agreed with him when he said that a Colony could not be a Colony unless it could defend itself, and line up in a general scheme of Imperial defence. He was sure that every one of our Colonies, as soon as it was able, would pay its fair share of Imperial defence. Some of the Colonies had not yet grown up, and a child could not be asked to do the work of a grown man. We must therefore wait for the growing up of our Imperial children. A remark had fallen from the hon. Member for South Salford to which he should like to allude. The hon. Member had rather departed from the line taken up by most hon. Members in these debates, and had made a violent attack upon those great mining magnates of whom they had heard so much during this session. He was surprised at the attack coming from such a quarter. They had had able discourses from the Member for South Donegal and the Member for Northampton on the constitutional question, and so on, but he should like for a few moments, if the Committee would bear with him, to say a word or two on the broader question of South African policy. He thought it would be well if they looked at every question that arose in South Africa, not from the point of view of that question alone but from the point of view of the whole of South Africa. Of course on any one question there were bound to be disagreements amongst them. They disagreed as to the justice of the South African War, the Chinese labour question, the native question, and so on. But there were certain points which he thought everyone in this House agreed upon. There were certain facts to begin with and the greatest of these facts was to his mind that they had got now under the British flag in South Africa a great collection of states, vast territories, varied governments, territories under responsible government, representative government, and Crown Colony Government, under the government of the British South African Company, and under protectorates. And the question of each of these territories had to be considered with reference to the others that lay around it. Of course all this involved great difficulty. They all agreed on that. The second point on which they were all agreed, to whatever Party they belonged, was the desire to bring, if possible, all these vast territories—all these varied governments—to one common life of happy contented peace under the British flag, to enable Briton and Boer, white man and black, to live in happiness side by side, to let them see and feel and appreciate the advantages of the great British institutions which he thought were the most advanced of any civilisation that the world had yet seen. It was only a question of method as to how it was to be achieved, and he thought that it would be well if they put aside their petty differences on those matters. Let them not mind whether the native question was a vexed question or not, but let the Colonies see that they treated this great matter with a broad view and did not try to hamper or force the hand of those who had to deal with it; let them try and inspire with confidence all their kith and kin in all these vast territories. There were one or two points upon which they were not agreed, and which would have to be discussed from different points of view. Among others there was the question of the constitution of the Transvaal. The whole question of the Transvaal Government depended on the electoral basis on which it was established. If they established it on a basis which would give the British a predominance in the first Parliament, could they be relied upon to give fair play and fair treatment to the Boers who had to live side by side with them? He said they could. If they established it on a basis which gave the Boers a predominance, would there be fair play given to those who lived side by side with them? He said no. The first thing the Boers would do would be to establish female suffrage, and when once they had established female suffrage in the Transvaal, there would be no possibility of the British ever being on an equality. Therefore in the interests of all the races in the Colony it was important that the British should be given the predominance in the first constitutional assembly; that the electoral basis which was established should insure that. With regard to the constitution to be given to the Orange River Colony, they were in a rather different position. They could not establish an electoral basis there which would give the British a predominance if the constitution was given at once. He therefore asked the Government to hesitate and think seriously before they gave the Orange River Colony responsible government now. Speaking of Natal, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies had said that responsible government had been given to Natal light-heartedly, but the House must remember that Natal was under the British flag from 1843 to 1893. Surely it would be doubly light-hearted to give the Orange River Colony responsible Government without their having that experience which had been gained in Natal by half a century of Crown Colony Government. He hoped the Government would wait till the land settlement in the Orange River Colony was in a more satisfactory condition; till there was a greater equality of Boers and Britons before they gave responsible government to the Colony. Then there was the question of the native unrest in Natal, and other questions to be considered. But whatever the question that had to be considered, it should be considered with a view to the benefit of the whole of South Africa and not with a view to the benefit of one Colony alone. If the question of the native unrest in Natal was mismanaged, the trouble would no doubt spread to adjoining Colonies, and possibly the whole of South Africa would soon be in a blaze. That was a matter that would have to be very carefully considered. In granting responsible government to these Colonies the loyal settlers should receive, as they deserved, the most sympathetic treatment the Government could give. Let them not feel that they had been deserted by the Home Government, as the loyal settlers felt they were deserted in 1881 by the mother country. The result of that desertion then was that most of the loyal settlers became the most bitter enemies of Great Britain. From being a source of loyalty to this country they became our most bitter foes. Let us take heed that that did not occur again. Let us give full consideration to the needs and wishes of the loyalists in South Africa. By doing that the interests of the whole country would be advanced. Although these views were represented by only a small Party in this House, he believed they were the views of all the Colonies of the British Empire, and the views of a large portion of the electorate of this country—of at least 3,000,000 of them, and he was glad to think from what had taken place within the last few days that they were also the views of a not inconsiderable section of the Party which supported the Government. But whatever might be the views of the people of England, they wanted to show consideration to the loyalists in South Africa. Let all Members agree on one point. Let them all try and lift this great question of South Africa above the noisy clamour of Party strife. By so doing they would serve the greatest interests of that great Empire which had been built up at so great a sacrifice of British blood and British gold.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that if the views expressed by the hon. Member for Preston were put into practice, the connection between India and this country which the hon. Member so much extolled would be an extremely short one. Would the hon. Member advocate the abolition of polygamy among the Mohammedan subjects of the Crown and the substitution of the Bible for the Koran in order to bring about the adoption of the ethical standards of Preston in our Eastern Empire? It was not for him to speak, perhaps, in too light a vein of the arguments used by any hon. Member of this House, but he must confess that when the hon. Member for Preston was speaking, he felt inclined, to borrow the phrase which had almost become classic on the Treasury Benches, and to ask the hon. Member if he really could have been serious. He had not himself either before, during, or after the General Election used a word about Chinese labour, and would not begin now. It was much too much with the House at the present time. The hon. Member for South Salford was pressing for the immediate abolition of the whole system without any regard whatever to those legitimate interests which had been founded upon and had grown up under this system. He and his constituents strongly disapproved of Chinese labour, but that conviction did not make it necessary to hold that there must be an immediate sacrifice of every interest that had legitimately grown up under the system. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool had demanded the immediate denunciation of the Convention of 1904. But that Convention covered many things wholly unconnected with South Africa or Chinese labour, and to press for its denunciation without regard to any other interests concerned seemed rather a Chinese proceeding. He might explain that in making that remark he had in his mind the original Chinaman who burnt his house down in order to enjoy roast pork. He had voted in this matter with and had adopted the position of the Government, thoroughly approving, as he believed his constituents did, of the despatch of Lord Elgin. He believed that despatch dealt fairly with the subject and that the Government would deal fairly with it. Surely it need not be brought up on every occasion to the exclusion of other more domestic matters which required to be discussed. He shared the regret which had been expressed on the Ministerial side that day that a Resolution should have been brought forward in censure of the late High Commissioner of South Africa. The administration of Lord Milner could not, in his opinion, be regarded as a success. To say that the war was inevitable was, in his opinion, to beg the whole question. If an administration ended in war and the exacerbation, rather than the appeasement, of racial feeling, he could not see that in that regard it was a phenomenally successful administration. But it was a very different thing to pursue and hale before the House as a malefactor a man who had endeavoured to do his best for his country. He had lived a large part of his life among members of this class and had worked under them, and with them. He knew what good men they were; how they strove to serve their country, what the difficulties of their positions were, and how different was their situation from that of the hon. Members of the House, who had in sight perhaps no greater calamity than the cooling of the soup. He had heard an admirable speech by the Lord Chancellor in which the noble Lord said nothing else should be accepted between European and native races but absolute justice. When an administrator, however, had two races before him, each of which had an absolutely different idea of what absolute justice was, his difficulties began. Hon. Members had spoken of the treatment of the native races to-day. He would point out that it was very easy to say that they were to be treated in all respects like Europeans. In the course of his life he had endeavoured to do that—and had incurred very often unpopularity, and sometimes, perhaps, even the enmity of his fellow countrymen in his endeavour to see the fullest justice done to the Orientals with whom he was brought in contact. But we must be just not only to Orientals, but to our own people. The hon. Member for Coventry had said that he had spent his life in travelling abroad, and therefore thought he knew something of these things. He himself made the same modest claim to the confidence of the House in this regard. He had seen British administrators in all parts of the world, and knew them to be perfectly just and trustworthy men, who were most merciful, humane, and incapable of doing injustice to the natives in their charge. Expressions such as those used in this House the other night—he would not repeat them—by the hon. Member for Lambeth gave infinite pain to those who administered our affairs in the distant parts of our Empire. That episode reminded him of the story of the pious Mahommedan who brought his son up in an equally pious way. The boy said to his father as they were kneeling in prayer at three o'clock a.m. on the flat roof of their house, and saw all their neighbours sleeping upon their roofs—

> "Oh, father, in all this great city only you and I are awake and engaged in prayer."

and the father replied—

> "Yes, my son, you, too, had better have been asleep than taking away so many peoples' characters."

As one who had spent his life amongst Orientals, it was to him a novel experience to be treated as if one was apologising for unjustifiable action taken by the Europeans in the Natal crisis. The hon. Member for Northampton had said he was no authority on constitutional law, which, however, he had laid down at length. He did not propose to follow the hon. Member in that argument, but he noticed that he put forward Lord Carnarvon as being a specially humane Colonial Secretary. He believed that at the present moment they had a man answering that description in the noble Earl who was the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who, he believed, would not do anything which was unjust, and, in fact, had had just that training and experience which would enable him to mete out justice to all concerned in such a juncture as the present position in Natal. As the Government had now dealt with the matter, it would be well if they were to leave it alone and get on with other business which was less controversial and painful and less likely to arouse angry feeling. To turn to one of such subjects, during the debates on Chinese labour reference had been made to the British Central African Protectorate. He wished to ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office were prepared to consider the question of making British Central Africa a Colony to which emigration from India would be lawful. Land settlement schemes for South Africa had been referred to, but the country to which he had alluded would never be satisfactorily settled unless they permitted the emigration of Indian agriculturists, who were just the class of people required to develop the cotton-growing potentialities of the Protectorate. He also hoped the Colonial Office would lose no opportunity of doing such justice as was possible to their Indian fellow subjects in South Africa. He sympathised acutely with their case, and it pained him to hear them confounded with the Kaffirs, because they were on a totally different plane of civilisation. He hoped everything that was possible would be done to alleviate their condition. He was, however, aware of the difficulties of the Colonial Office in dealing with the Colonial Governments upon such a subject, and for his part he believed it was too late in the day to teach such administrations within what limits they should practice the arts of self-government.

Lord MORPETH (Birmingham, S.) said the hon Member for Northampton had tried to make a speech with regard to Natal which would not be provocative and which would not give offence to his Colonial fellow subjects. But, nevertheless, he had said that the Ministers of Natal were not archangels. Even the wildest Imperialist on the Opposition side of the House was not of that opinion, but as the hon. Member had gone out of his way to say that, there was no doubt that he meant that they were something less than men. [Cries of "No, no."] That was the only meaning that could be attributed to his sentence.

Mr. PAUL: Nothing of the sort.

Lord MORPETH said that was a matter which he would leave to the House. It was obvious that the hon. Member would not have said that if he had meant the contrary. When people were suffering under such difficulties in Natal, language of that kind was calculated to make the task of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies harder than it was at the present time. It was not the criticism of the Opposition, but the unpatriotic remarks of their own supporters that was making the task of the Government so hard. He did not imagine that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies was thin-skinned, but he had complained of their criticism. The hon. Gentleman ought to remember that he himself had said that this was no sham fight, but a real battle, and had gone on to say that the rifles were all loaded with ball cartridge. He assumed that what he meant was that he was not only going to change the policy of the late Government in order to satisfy the eager spirits below the gangway, but that he intended to reverse the policy of the late Unionist Government. If that was his intention he must be prepared for criticism. Members of the Opposition would not be doing their duty if they did not criticise those alterations of policy which they believed to be for the worse. It was not only the small Party on the Opposition Benches who disagreed with the hon. Gentleman's policy. All classes in the Colonies had condemned the policy pursued on this question by the Government, and it had also been condemned throughout the Colonies by the Press.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

NORTH WEST LONDON RAILWAY BILL [By Order].

Read a second time, and committed.

SUPPLY [5th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,050, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a Grant in Aid of certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

Lord MORPETH said the Colonial Press which had condemned the Ministerial position had been described as having displayed unscrupulous malignity. Not only was there almost unanimity of opinion among the colonial subjects, but even on the Under Secretary's own side there were many Members who seemed to be uneasy. Some of them had given expression to their uneasiness in this House, and others had written to the papers. The Under-Secretary himself had warned the House in the most solemn language in the debate which took place on the native question of the dangers which hung over any impolitic course. When the Under-Secretary made that speech he thought nobody could foresee the somewhat grave events which were impending, and that that warning was addressed to his own side in the hope that they might profit by it. They did not seem to have profited by it, because the hon. Member had followed up that warning with other remarks of a contradictory kind, so that it was difficult to know the object at which he was driving. In the Colonies it must have been impossible to know what the object of the hon. Gentleman was. He did not propose to deal with the question of Chinese labour except from one point of view. On the question of Chinese labour in South Africa the other Colonies were more or less in sympathy with the Government, but when the Government declared that they would exercise a veto against the Transvaal if, after the grant of responsible government, it elected for such labour, the Colonies were universally against the Government. The reason given by the Government was that they would interfere only when moral considerations were involved. Nothing in this world was more offensive than the assumption of a superior morality; in private or public life there was nothing more irritating and disagreeable. He confessed that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies was the last man he would have suspected to be influenced in that direction, but now that he had joined the Party opposite he seemed to have been engulfed by the general Party characteristic. This assumption of moral superiority was, of course, peculiarly irritating to our fellow-subjects in the Colonies—the assumption that they were not actuated by moral motives, that they were less humane, less careful of the interests of human life—because they did not know that it was part of the recognised armoury of Party warfare. On that point what he wished to impress on the Government was that it was for the very reason that these moral and humanitarian considerations were so important that they were questions which should properly be left for the decision of the Colonies themselves. The gift of self-government to manage details and petty affairs was a worthless gift for which the Colonies would neither ask nor care. It was because these questions were vital that colonial statesmen rightly attached so much importance to the principle that their decision should be left to them. Of course, if we could not trust the humanity and morality of our fellow-subjects in the Colonies, we must withhold responsible government from them, so as to keep some sort of control. He urged the Government to make up their minds whether they were prepared to leave to the South Africans the management of their internal affairs, their native affairs, and all legislation dealing with local matters. If they could not do that, it would be far wiser to postpone the grant of responsible government until the Colonies were fit for it. The Colonial Under-Secretary had spoken of responsible government having been given "too light-heartedly" to Natal—Natal, which for thirty-five years, through difficult times and many crises, had earned responsible government; while the Government of which he was a Member was going to grant responsible government at once to the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, which had not even a representative Government and had not served their apprenticeship to Parliamentary institutions. The Under-Secretary had said that the Natal Government in regard to recent events had displayed some precipitancy of action. A great deal had been heard from some hon. Members about the legal aspect of the question. They had disclaimed being lawyers, and he also made the same disclaimer. It seemed to him that the constitutional position was perfectly plain. The Government were entitled to ask the Governor for further information; they were constitutionally entitled to ask some delay in the execution until they were assured by the Governor whether everything was in order. It was not the

Lord Morpeth.

infringement of constitutional propriety on the part of the Government of which they complained. It was rather of the language and the policy of the Party opposite which had made the position so difficult, and which had strained the political relations between the home Ministry and the Government of Natal. Such a condition of affairs was bound to bring about a crisis. He thought the way out of the deadlock which had been created was settled by the correspondence which took place between Sir Harry Parkes and Sir Hercules Robinson so far back as 1874. He thought the hon. Member for South Donegal did not go sufficiently into that matter. Sir Hercules Robinson pointed out that the Governor had an undoubted right to reject the advice of his Ministers if he was prepared to accept the consequence. The consequence was that he might find himself without Ministers, and with no one ready to undertake the duty. It was, of course, technically correct that the rejection of the advice of Ministers necessarily involved their resignation, but he need scarcely point out that in practice Ministers did not tender their resignation for a trivial difference of opinion between themselves and the Governor. Therefore, the way out of this apparent deadlock was the use of common sense. The quarrel of himself and his friends with the Party opposite was not that they had infringed the constitution or taken a wrong view of the functions and powers of the Governor, but that, owing to their words and criticisms, owing to the reflections they had made in regard to the humanity and morality of colonial statesmen, such a state of tension had been produced that the Natal Ministers resigned, as the Under-Secretary had said, precipitately. He hoped that the condition of affairs that had been created in Natal owing to the criticisms of the Party opposite would be a warning to the Government. The Government should recognise that it was only by co-operation with and consideration of the legitimate wishes and ambitions of our colonial fellow-subjects that success in our colonial administration could be hoped for. He did not propose to go into details with regard to the future Transvaal constitution, but he did say that it was our duty carefully to consider whether the South African Colonies were ripe for responsible Government. It would be far better to delay the grant of that Government to the Colonies, and to give it to them when we were ready to trust them with the management of their own affairs, than hastily to give it to them now and then continually interfere with and hamper their action. That was the worst policy we could adopt. The other consideration which we should keep before our eyes was that nothing we did in the granting of a constitution should endanger the British connection. When there was a faction in this House that desired to undo the work of the late war—he would not for a moment assume that his Majesty's Government had any desire or policy of that sort—he held that when they granted this constitution it should be in such a form that injustice would not be done to the British section in South Africa. When it was given no doubt justice must be done all round. We must not gerrymander the constitution in order to give an undue advantage to one Party over another. There was no necessity to disregard general principles so as to give an undue advantage to the Dutch population over the British population. "One vote one value" was, he supposed, a democratic and Liberal principle. It did not apply in this country because it was sometimes used as a rider to "One man one vote," and it did not suit hon. Gentlemen who sat below the gangway, but none the less, he ventured to say, that it remained a democratic and Liberal principle. Nobody who was going to start the constitution afresh would begin by making constituencies like those of Romford and Galway. These considerations should be kept in mind in the framing of the constitution to be given to the South African Colonies. That was the case which he and his friends put from their side of the House. They denied that they had dealt with this question in any factious or unpatriotic spirit. They therefore urged the Under-Secretary not to pursue a policy of interference with the Colonies, but to treat Colonial Governments with greater generosity, to recognise that they had received responsible government, that they had received what was practically independence, and that they were tied to this country only by good administration and the wisdom and tact of the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said that on five occasions he had moved a reduction of the Colonial Vote in previous sessions of Parliament. He was glad to say that on this occasion he would have the pleasure of supporting the Government. He was not supporting the Government simply because he sat on the Ministerial side of the,House, for in regard to South African affairs he had always endeavoured to take the view which he thought was most consistent with the best interests of the Colonies. A number of suggestions had been made in regard to land settlement. Hon. Members had urged the Under-Secretary to approach the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to obtain grants of money to place a larger number of British settlers on the soil in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Enormous sums of money had been spent for this purpose, and he earnestly trusted that the Government would not accept the suggestions made to them, for the whole policy of placing British settlers on the soil was, he was sure, doomed to failure. After twelve months the settlers were found sitting on the door steps of the mining magnates asking for mining claims, and the whole of the money invested in settling these people on the land was wasted. With regard to the rising in Natal, he would urge the Government not to underrate it. A relative of his own, Sir John Dartnell, formed the Natal Mounted Police thirty years ago, and he had had the opportunity that very day of discussing with him the unhappy rising in South Africa. No one could deny that Sir John Dartnell was in a better position perhaps than anyone in this country, or even in South Africa, to give an opinion on this question. Sir John Dartnell said that the chief Bambaata, who had been the cause of the unfortunate policemen being murdered, had been for many years a source of incessant annoyance to him when he commanded the police, and he feared that unless His Majesty's Government took very strenuous measures the position in Natal would become very serious. Therefore, he urged the Under-Secretary not to underrate the rising in Natal. It should be dealt with rapidly, or more natives would join this disaffected chief, and a general rising of the whole native population in the Colony might be developed. He had risen chiefly to draw attention to a matter which, in his opinion, constituted one of the greatest scandals—and they had been many—that had arisen in South Africa during the last five years. Three years ago he drew attention, with little success, to the situation which had arisen out of the discovery of the Premier Diamond Mine. Shortly after the commencement of the war the Government sent out to South Africa a Commission to inquire into the reduction of owners' rights, and at the head of that Commission was the distinguished public servant, Sir David Barbour. In his Report Sir David Barbour said—

> "As regards any valuable mining rights which may exist in lands which have not hitherto been proclaimed as public diggings, or which have not been granted to private persons, it seems to me that it is still possible to take measures for protecting the interest of the State. For the past failure to safeguard the State assets for the benefit of the community there is now practically no remedy. It is beyond question that in some cases the law was modified, strained, and even violated, with the connivance of officials of the Transvaal Government, in order to secure illegitimate advantage for mining speculators and others."

Then Sir David Barbour went on to say—

> "The first measure to be adopted would be the reduction of the privileges in regard to mining rights which have been granted to the owners of the land."

Having that report before them, what did the late Government do? He was not blaming the present Government, for they were not responsible for the position arising out of the acts of their predecessors. In 1902 a mine of very great value was discovered in the Transvaal. Under the mining laws of the Transvaal the owners of the farm on which the mine was, were entitled to certain rights. The first occasion on which the mine came before the public was a statement made by Sir Alfred

Lawley in opening the Transvaal Legislative Council on June 29th, 1903, in which he said—

> "Investigations have brought to light the existence of diamond fields which bid fair to rival in richness, if not excel, any field which has hitherto been discovered."

Well, that was not by any means, as events proved, an over-estimation of the facts of the case; for it had proved to be a mine of immense value. Before the war the position in the Transvaal in regard to mining claims was a very difficult one, although it had been modified to-day. Before the war the owner of a farm which was proclaimed a mining field was entitled to one-tenth of the claims, but shortly before the war broke out, when the Transvaal became aware that diamonds had been discovered in the vicinity of Pretoria, they introduced a law that the owners of the farm were entitled to one-eighth. The Premier Mine consisted of 4,000 claims, and under the law of 1898 the owners of the farm were entitled to 530 claims. but under the old law they would be entitled to only 410 claims. The late Government, however, stepped in and said they thought it was desirable to create a monopoly in diamonds, and that monopoly had been persisted in during the last twelve months, to the detriment of the whole community in the Transvaal; and by a special law the late Government gave to the Company which bought the farm 1,600 claims instead of the 530 to which they were entitled, and undertook that 2,400 claims should not be worked. When this special legislation was passed for the benefit of the mine owners—as so much of the legislation introduced by Lord Milner during his administration of the Transvaal had been—the effect was to give away millions of money which belonged to the State. He wished the House distinctly to understand that he had not the slightest intention of attacking Sir Richard Solomon, the Attorney-General in the Transvaal, because he was one of the few honest men in that country; but rightly or wrongly the Attorney-General thought that a monopoly in diamonds was necessary. On June 29th he said—

> "The world could only take a certain quantity of diamonds. The output must be restricted. If they exceeded the world's demand, down would come the price, and away would go the value of their property."

Then he went on to say that—

> "The industry at Kimberley was at one time on the verge of ruin, but a great man averted that ruin. The late Mr. Rhodes saw perfectly well that the only way to save the diamond industry in Kimberley was to amalgamate the different companies working claims in Griqualand West so as to bring the mines under one control, and so regulate the output of diamonds, seeing that the world could only take a certain amount of diamonds during the year. One of the most important lessons taught them by the diamond mining in Griqualand West was this: to keep their diamond mines as much as possible under one control. That he ventured to say was an axiom in diamond mine legislation, and it was an axiom the Government had endeavoured to give effect to as far as possible in the Ordinance."

On the same day Sir R. Solomon said—

> "The principle was that the mine, as much as possible, should be under the control of one person or company. When they found that the owner of land on which diamonds were found had a large interest, it was surely better for the Government to try and make some agreement with the owner than that another person should do so, and thus destroy the principle for which they were contending."

Then Mr. Hill, Solicitor of the De Beers Life Governors, stated in the Legislative Council that—

> "Any criticisms that were directed at the Ordinance should be in the direction that the Government had given too little to the owner, and when they got to the Committee stage he intended to move an Amendment to the effect that the owner's rights should be further increased."

He now came to the position as it stood to-day. The Premier Diamond Mining Company was formed and registered in November, 1902. The capital was £80,000 in £1 shares, and the vendors received from the company 67,000 fully paid shares. Ten thousand shares were subscribed at par, and 3,000 shares were sold afterwards by the vendors for £74,250. £10,000 was all that was subscribed as working capital, and the market value at present of the mine was £6,000,000 sterling. By arrangement with the Government the total expenditure of the mine was paid out of the profits, and the Government were to be entitled to receive 60 per cent. of the profits. The company last year made a profit approximately of £622,000. The shareholders who were entitled to only 40 per cent. of the profits received £269,000, while His Majesty's Government who were entitled to 60 per cent. of the profits, received only £259,000. Out of the profits of the first two years, according to the statements of the chairman, Dr. Wagner, there had been expended altogether £958,520, every penny of which had been supplied by the mine itself. There were no Government directors; no reports were issued to the Government except the annual report. He asked what were the late Government doing that they did not take steps fully to protect the interest of the British taxpayers, and why they did not have representatives on the board of directors to look after the interests of the British taxpayers. The company had paid in dividends 400 per cent. It paid in directors' fees £13,000 per annum. It paid commission to its agents in London, outside office expenses, amounting to £32,655. There were enormous items of expenditure which ought to be subjected to most careful scrutiny by a Government auditor. The directors in their report for 1905 stated that 124 loads had been proved in the first 400 feet of the mine. Although he could not remember Kimberley in the early days, it was worked by individual diggers for sixteen years, and everybody was able to earn a decent living; and he maintained that this Premier mine could be worked profitably with white labour. It would find employment for all the unemployed in the Transvaal. The monopolists had shut down the mines for the purpose of raising the price of diamonds. Three years ago the right hon. Member for West Birmingham said that a monopoly was necessary; but why should there be a monopoly in diamonds any more than in any other article of production. He contended that it was not in the province of Government to create a monopoly in diamonds. In the Premier mine 1,000 white men were employed and 5,000 kaffirs. What was the cost of working this ground? According to Mr. Cullinan——

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover) asked whether the Government were responsible through the Colonial Office for these details of working.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL on a point of order asked whether the hon. Member's charge that a monopoly had been worked in favour of individuals at the expense of the public at large did not come clearly within the scope of criticism of the Colonial Office Vote.

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member was not out of order, but was going into great detail.

Mr. MARKHAM said he would only contend that if, as he had already stated, this mine could be worked with white labour it was the duty of the Government, being entitled to 60 per cent. of the profits, to see that it was so worked. If the Government said that this would be an injustice to the shareholders he would be content if the Under-Secretary would say that the claims which were the property of the Government should be sold with precautions to see that they did not fall into the hands of the monopolists. The people of the Transvaal had had their property taken away by one of the worst Governments that ever sat on that side of the House. He thanked the Under-Secretary for the Colonies for the assurance given to him that day that a Report as to whether the mine could be worked with white labour would be called for. He had frequently referred to the dynamite industry, and it appeared that a new dynamite monopoly had now been granted to De Beers in spite of the fact that the matter had again and again been called attention to. The result was that British manufactured dynamite was shut out of the Transvaal to-day, curious as that fact might seem. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, writing in January, 1899, to Sir William Butler, said that—

> "The question of the importation of explosives into the South African Republic has as you are aware been brought to my notice by British manufacturers, who complain that their manufactures are refused admittance into the Republic, and that they are thereby debarred from carrying on their commerce within the Republic conformably to Article XIV of the London Convention. On the receipt of these representations it became my duty to give the whole subject my full and careful consideration. Her Majesty's Government are advised that the creation of a monopoly in favour of the State is not necessarily inconsistent with

Article XIV of the London Convention even when exercised by a concessionaire, provided that the concession is intended in good faith to benefit the State generally, and not simply to favour the concessionaire."

The company to whose proceedings he was calling attention erected a factory near Capetown, and Lord Milner's influence was brought to bear and a coast duty was placed upon dynamite all round the coast. The result was that to-day British dynamite was shut out of the Transvaal by a coast duty of 1½d. a pound, and, although the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had severe censure for Mr. Kruger's Government for granting a dynamite monopoly, a monopoly still existed in the hands of the De Beers Company protected by this coast duty. What could be said for the integrity of the British people, who allowed this to continue after having carried through a war for the benefit of stock-jobbing Jews? They protested against the monopoly granted by Kruger's Government, and set up a monopoly in favour of German Jews, and yet the Party opposite professed a desire to promote trade with the Colonies. He trusted that diamonds, dynamite, and other monopolies sought by speculators would have the attention of the present Government. These were matters of vast interest to the people of South Africa, but it was difficult for the people of this country to learn the truth, for the Press of South Africa and the agencies supplying the Press in this country were under the control directly or indirectly of millionaire monopolists. He could read letters to the House that would show how Press information was gerrymandered in the interest of speculators, but the former Chairman of Committees had ruled that to do so would not be in order. An opportunity, however, would be given to the British public to read these letters, as they were shortly to be published, and they would prove conclusively that information coming to this country was gerrymandered in the interest of certain millionaires, and there were very few newspapers from which the country could learn the actual facts from South Africa. The question of the Press was a grave one. If it continued to be as cruel as it had been and to be controlled in the interests of certain millionaires, it would do an immense injury to the people of this country.

MR. WYNDHAM: I intervene at this moment to endeavour to elicit from the Government a consistent account of their attitude towards these South African problems. On both sides of the House hopes have been expressed that they may deal with the question of South African policy in no Party spirit. It would have been easier to fulfil those hopes if the Under-Secretary had seen his way earlier in the evening to give us a plain statement of the general attitude of the Government towards these problems. I do not criticise the Under-Secretary's reserving his right to reply. We have had speeches, the authors of which said they attempted to avoid recrimination, in which the questions of Chinese labour, the intervention of the Government in respect of the executions in Natal, and the Resolution passed, or attempted to be passed, in censure of Lord Milner, have been raised again and again. What are we to make of this rehash of partisan speeches? The Government are in a difficult position. Their daily diet is served out, now by one section of the House, now by another. It is the leek, the whole leek, and nothing but the leek, and the Opposition are not called upon to share in the repast. There are supporters of the Government who have indulged in talk about our Colonial fellow-subjects which is bound to be misunderstood in South Africa. For example, the hon. Member for Preston gave the pure view of a certain section of the Government's supporters. In all seriousness he asked why the resignation of the Ministry of Natal was a matter which should give them more concern than the resignation of the town council of West Ham. It is hopeless to argue with hon. Members who apply the test of population equally to a new country full of hope of a great future destiny and to a suburb of a great metropolis. The hon. Member said that it was a fair test. Will he apply it to the past as well as to the present? If so, Athens and Jerusalem are the most inconspicuous cities in the history of the world. The Under-Secretary seems to be more concerned with adapting the theories of this or that section of his supporters to the political exigencies of the Government than with the grim facts of South African life. South Africa is suffering from political neuritis. All its nerves are tender, and the Under-Secretary is content to run the risk of what will come out at the other end of the cable from the rhetorical speeches he delivers in this House. We began by discussing land settlement in the Orange River Colony, but the success of land settlement and all else in South Africa depends very largely on the attitude of His Majesty's Government to these questions. The other day a mistake, a considerable mistake, was made by the Colonial Secretary as to the amount of loss which has attended the land settlement operations already carried on.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It was a slip of the tongue.

Mr. WYNDHAM: In that case I will not dwell upon it. What I was thinking of was not so much the accidental mistakes as that all these theories upon native questions, upon economic questions, and upon constitutional questions, look very different when they are received in short cable messages in South Africa. [Ministerial cheers.] I do not attempt to evade the purport of the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They mean that, in the opinion of hon. Members opposite, we on this side of the House have sought to derive some Party advantage in discussing these matters. I return to what I have said before, that in my judgment there is a profound division between our attitude towards South Africa and the attitude of many of those who support the Government. What we want to know in precise terms is the attitude of the Government, and then these misconceptions may occur less frequently in the future than they have done in the past. We want to know the attitude of the Government towards two great sets of facts. We want to know the attitude of the Government towards the nature of the constitutions they are going to confer on the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal Colony—towards what I may call the Reform Bill the Government are going to give to those Colonies. And we also want to know the attitude of the Government, stated with some precision and consistency, towards native and economic questions in South Africa. Let me take the first question—their attitude on the governments which are to be given. The Government have appointed a Committee. I shall refrain, naturally, from criticising the *personnel* of that Committee. The fact that I know and esteem both Lord Sandhurst and Sir West Ridgeway is nothing to the point. I do not say anything against those two Gentlemen, but I do criticise the Government for not having put upon the Committee some person or statesman of eminence belonging to the opposite Party. When my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had to deal with the West Indian question, he put the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as Chairman of that Committee. I think my right hon. friend was wise, and, in so far as the Government has not followed that course, even to the extent of placing on the Committee one Member of standing and eminence, though differing from them on Party questions, I think they have been unwise. The terms of reference are not wide, but they are obscure. That, I must say, is a great mistake in view of the suspicion, to whatever cause we attribute it, of their attitude towards the Colonies. That suspicion is a misfortune, and the Government should do all in their power to dispel it. The terms of reference are so obscure that many have read them to mean that any amendment which would throw power into the hands of the Boers was open to investigation, but that any amendment of the proposed constitution put forward by the late Colonial Secretary which might be held to secure British representation was not open to investigation. That is a very unhappy state, if not of ignorance, of doubt. It would not be candid on my part to pretend that we can discuss South African affairs if we do not keep in our minds the memories of the past. There are two sets of memories. The British are proud to know that they went to South Africa before the Dutch, and speeches which seem to suggest that they are interlopers are calculated to give offence to them; whilst speeches which seem to suggest that neither

British nor Dutch have any right there affront the memories of both the British and the Dutch. It must be borne in mind that the natives in South Africa are not aborigines. If the Government intend that full responsible government shall be given forthwith to the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, they can no longer quote Lord Durham in defence of the course they are going to pursue. Lord Durham laid it down that there should be British preponderance in the legislature given to Canada. The Government cannot claim the support of Lord Durham's authority unless they intend that there shall be during the initial years of self-government that British preponderance which Lord Durham sought to secure in Canada. That to many plain men would seem to be a necessary corollary of the war. Whether the war was right or wrong we hold, as many of the supporters of the Government hold, and as many of the present Cabinet hold, that it was a just, necessary, and inevitable war. But whatever may be the case since the war has been fought, it is idle to revert to consequences past, and to indulge again in theories which, in my opinion, did more than anything else to precipitate that war. It is a misfortune that the impression should be created in South Africa that we neglect the views of those who have lived there all their lives. In South Africa people are prepared to take the consequences of the war, but they are not prepared to accept full responsibility for the Government if his Majesty's Government reserve the right to interfere in what most concerns them. If that course is adopted we shall revert to a state of affairs more unhappy than that which prevailed before the war. Before the war, whether you look at the Sand River Convention of 1852, the Bloemfontein Convention of 1884, the Pretoria Convention of 1881, or the London Convention of 1884, you will find that the Government of this country, speaking through the voice of Colonial Secretary after Colonial Secretary, always asserted that this country as the paramount Power had a right to interfere in certain circumstances. I say that among the many causes of this war was a growing irritation on the part of the Dutch against the right which was retained in spite of all those Conventions. That was a contributory cause to this just, necessary and inevitable war. In that war we had the support of our self-governing Colonies. If after we have granted full responsible Government we still assert the right of intervention whenever it so pleases us and run the risk, I hardly like to say of war, but of social strife almost amounting to war—if that should be the result of interference on the part of the Government—then, instead of our having the support of all our Colonies, the support of all our Colonies will be thrown into the other scale. To grant full responsible government and at the same time allow it to be understood that we shall frequently interfere is to bring about a worse, a more precarious, and a more dangerous state of affairs than even that which led to the late just, necessary and inevitable war.

I pass on to the attitude of the Government towards the native question and the economic question, but I do not wish in so doing to rake up the question of the execution of natives in Natal. As to those executions I consider that Lord Elgin had a difficult decision to take in a very brief period. But I must say the right of the Government exists, but if it is to be exercised in cases of procedure I doubt the expediency of exercising that right. Martial law is only useful and defensible if it is proclaimed in order to arrest a dangerous state at the outset of affairs before worse befals. After we had explicitly or tacitly consented to the proclamation of martial law, I doubt the expediency of trying to review the procedure. It may be truly said that to review the merits of the case of the necessity for martial law would take weeks and months, and that if it were proper to do that it should have been done at the first intimation of these difficulties. It is too late to do it when the actions of the Natal Government come home to be confirmed. That has left, perhaps unjustly, certainly unhappily, an impression which must be dispelled if South Africa is to progress under the Government of His Majesty. Hon. Members in this House sometimes speak of the attitude of our fellow-subjects in South Africa towards the natives in terms which show that they do not appreciate the situation. I suppose we have all of us sometimes read novels dealing with the Western States of America and depicting the enmity of every man, woman and child to the Indian. But those people lived in close contact with the Indian tribes, and in Natal white men, women, and children live in close proximity to these native races, and round Natal, to the north and south, there are the native reservations for the tribes who have been allowed to cherish the recollection of the days of perennial fighting in which their ancestors indulged. It is very hard for anyone to blame these native races. They are different from ourselves; they and their ancestors have not passed the steps of the ascent of man from savagery, through barbarism, to civilisation. They suddenly respond to a call of the wild, which they cannot explain; they break out, throw back to their savage ancestors for reasons that are inscrutable. The white men in their midst know that they live under the constant menace of these reversions to the Stone Age, and if they are apprehensive and passionate in their views it is not for hon. Members in Westminster, comfortably discussing the subject, to point out that our fellow-subjects are lacking in the humanity which we are so proud of, and of which we make such boast. I shall give the Under-Secretary ample time to reply, but I must deal with the attitude of the Government towards the economic question in South Africa. Now there is a myth, widely believed in this country and in some sections of this House, that all these troubles are due solely to avarice and the thirst for gold. The hon. Baronet who opened this discussion said we ought not to hold that gold mining was the one and only industry of South Africa. I quite agree. Let me meet the question sometimes asked, why this hurry about gold production? Why make these efforts, legitimate, or illegitimate, to get labour at all costs for the mines? The reason is that the revenue of these Colonies, the revenue of the Transvaal, varies directly with the gold production. If there is an increase of 25 per cent. in gold production there is an increase of 25 per cent. in the revenue of the Transvaal. They are in permanent relation. The old rate of production just met the expenses of the Government, and if that is continued until the mines are exhausted in fifty or a hundred years the country will return to the state of affairs which obtained before the mines were worked. If, on the other hand, you can get this excess production and excess revenue the latter can be devoted, as it has been, to the very things which the hon. Baronet opposite and others have advocated, such as irrigation and afforestation, the things which create a country and a civilisation, and which will leave something after the mines are exhausted. There is no theory more fanciful than that the policy is supported by the mineowners and their chattels; they are opposed to it at every turn. It has been supported by such men as Sir George Farrar and Sir Percy FitzPatrick, by men who have tried to make a country, and it is associated with the name of Lord Milner. I believe that, without distinction of race, South Africa is in favour of having this surplus revenue in order that the country may be developed, and that there may be a civilisation after the war. On these surplus revenues the railway to a large extent depends. The railways in our old Colonies of the Cape and Natal were built at a cost of £22,000,000 of Colonial money. Are you going to hold back those powers in these Colonies? If you are, how can you pretend that you are really giving them full responsible Government? Moreover, you cannot deal with each of these Colonies as if they were separate islands. They all hang together, and to grant responsible Government to one Colony until you are assured that the Colony will come into line with the other Colonies is to court disappointment and disaster. These Colonies were interdependent. Throughout that country, the people, Boer and Briton, are opposed to what, rightly or wrongly, they think is the Government's attitude towards the native question, towards the question of the Imperial veto, and, possibly, towards the Government's attitude on the economic question. The Government will not decrease their difficulties by accusing the Opposition of endeavouring to exploit South African questions for partisan objects. They will not diminish their difficulties by saying that we have been defeated at the polls; on this question we stand for more than 2,000,000 voters in the home country, and we stand up for what we believe to be the view of our fellow-subjects in the Colonies. In one speech after another delivered from the Government side the Opposition has been begged to be patriotic. Though small in number, our support has been solicited. I have watched the Government bowing, almost cringing, to one section after another in the House, and I felt sure that the Unionists' turn would come. We are now invited to refrain from attacking the Government. [" Oh ! "] Yes, in speech after speech we were told to leave all recrimination upon one side. On this and on other questions I have to say to the Government that when they have a conviction, and stick to it, the Opposition will be prepared to support them. But when they arrive at a conviction they never adhere to it. I except, of course, the Secretary of State for War who arrived at the sound conviction that the Government ought to do nothing with regard to Army reform for a year and has stuck to it. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies should be the last person to deprecate the importation of partisan considerations into colonial discussions, for his motto seemed to be "Strike while the iron is hot." That is a capital plan if you have made up your minds as to the exact shape you mean to press upon the iron. But if you have not, and you have to send out a Committee of your political supporters to make up your mind for you, then all the hammer strokes only serve to generate heat. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies must needs run a tilt at the Press of this country. One of the latest developments of Liberalism is to defame the Press. What Press was the Under-the Under-Secretary attacking when he spoke of "the malignant and unscrupulous Press" ? [An hon. Member: The Conservative Press.] If the Under-Secretary reads the telegrams which come from our Colonies, he would gather that, not the Conservative Press, but the Colonial Press, and not only the South African, but the Australian, the New Zealand, and the Canadian Press, was all deeply exercised and indignant at the words of the Under-Secretary. No doubt the hon. Member has an explanation. The wicked people who control the cables do not do justice to the speeches which he delivers in this House. But it appears now that information sent home from the Government of Natal is being withheld from the House of Commons. Perhaps the Under-Secretary will tell us why this is so. Has the Government any further information as to the condition of Natal ? On this native question—this economic and political question —the Government owes it to the Empire to make a clear, plain statement which will dissipate and dispel the mist of suspicion that exists. The attitude of the Government towards a handful of men in this or that colony may have a very grave effect upon the ultimate fate of South Africa. The ultimate fate of our American Colonies was decided by the attitude of the Home Government, and I now say, "God forbid that that should be repeated ! "

*THE UNDER - SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): We have had an interesting and discursive debate, and not the least interesting, and certainly not the least discursive part of that debate has been the contribution which we owe to the characteristically fertile ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I should not find it easy to do justice to the many interesting and valuable speeches which have been made during that debate, because of the extraordinary variety, and in many cases because of the extreme complexity, of the subjects with which they have dealt. For instance, I cannot hope to follow the hon. Member for Mansfield very deeply into the recesses of those diamond mines he has mentioned, or into the complexities of that dynamite monopoly problem of which he has spoken with the knowledge of an expert and something like the vehemence of a fanatic. I am not an encyclopædia. I am only an Under-Secretary. But, I would observe that when the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division of Nottinghamshire speaks of the evils of a monopoly in diamonds, he should remember that, from an economic point of view, diamonds occupy a very peculiar and unnatural position. One of the great elements of value in a diamond is its rarity; and when rarity is not merely a condition of price, but a condition of value, it is positively to the advantage of the consumer that diamonds should be dear.

I do not think the House will wish me to plunge again into a discussion of Natal. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover that His Majesty's Government, so far as I am aware—for I have not left the House during the debate this evening—have no further information on that grave matter. Nor do I think any advantage would be gained if I were to repeat the declared, settled, and accepted policy of His Majesty's Government upon the subject of Chinese labour. Still less do I think any public advantage would be served if I were to attempt an elaborate reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. There are many subjects connected with South Africa, and I desire to do my best to speak upon them. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has asked me for a plain statement of the general attitude of His Majesty's Government, I should probably better consult the interest of the Committee by endeavouring to make that statement than by embarking upon those personalities with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon occupied and amused, though I can hardly say delighted, the attention of the Committee in the earlier hours of the sitting.

Mr. Churchill.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover asked me to state, first of all, the general position of the Government with regard to the constitutional issue in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies. In doing so the right hon. Gentleman referred in almost slighting terms to the Committee which was appointed to inquire into that matter, and which so far as I have been informed, has been received with almost universal approval even in quarters beyond the range of His Majesty's Government. Let me ask the Committee to realise what a long way we have travelled in the discussion of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony constitution. When the change of Government took place there was Mr. Lyttelton's constitution before us. That proposed representative and not responsible government. Under that constitution the election would have been held in March of this year, and the Assembly would have met in June, if the home Government had not changed. But just at the time that the Government changed in December two questions arose—the question of whether or not soldiers of the British Army should be allowed to vote; and the question whether it would not be better to have sixty constituencies instead of thirty—and, as both questions involved necessary alterations in the Letters Patent, the time was ripe, quite apart from any difference which the change of the men at the helm might make, for a reconsideration and review of the whole form of the Government which was to be given to the two colonies. The objection that must most readily occur in considering Mr. Lyttelton's constitution is that it was unworkable. It proposed that there should be from six to nine Ministers nominated in an Assembly of thirty-five, afterwards to be increased to sixty elective members. The position of a Minister is one of considerable difficulty. He often has to defend rather an awkward job, and has to depend upon the nimbleness of his wits, and when those fail him upon the loyalty of his supporters. But no Minister can move very far upon his road with satisfaction or success if he has not behind him either a nominated majority or an organised Party majority. Mr. Lyttelton's Ministers had neither. They were alone, hopelessly outnumbered in an Assembly the greater part of which was avowedly in favour of responsible and not of representative government. These Ministers had no Parliamentary experience and no ascertained Parliamentary ability. They would have been forced to carry their Bills and their Estimates through an Assembly in the main opposed to them. All this time, while we should have given to these Ministers this serious duty, we should ourselves have had to bear the whole responsibility in this country for everything that was done under their authority; and their authority could only be exerted through an Assembly which, on the face of it, they would not control. The Committee can easily imagine the telegrams and the questions which would have been addressed to these Ministers on native matters, on the question of the administration of the Chinese Ordinance, on all the thousand and one intricate questions with which we are at the present moment involved in South Africa. And what would have been the position of these Ministers from time to time in a hostile Assembly in which they had no friends, and without perhaps any Parliamentary talents of their own—what possibility would they have had of maintaining themselves in such an Assembly? Is it not certain that they would have broken down under the strain to which they would have been exposed, that the Assembly would have been infuriated, that Parties differing from each other on every conceivable question, fiercely divided by race and religion and language, would have united in common hatred of the interference of the outside Power and the Government of bureaucrats, and that then they would speedily have got to the bottom of the hill? There would have been a swift transition. The Legislative Assembly would have converted itself into a constituent Assembly, and it would have taken by force all that the Government now have it in their power to concede with grace, distinction, and authority. On these grounds His Majesty's Government came to the conclusion that it would be right to omit the stage of representative government altogether and to go directly to the stage of responsible government. It is the same in politics as it is in war. When one crest line has been left it is necessary to go to the next. It is quite idle to halt half way in the valley between. That is to court imminent and certain destruction and the moment you have abandoned the safe position of a Crown Colony Government, or Government with a nominated majority, there is no stopping place whatever on which you may rest the sole of your foot until you come to a responsible Legislative Assembly with an executive obeying that Assembly. [An IRISH MEMBER: Why not in Ireland too?] I do not attempt to localise the logic of these arguments. If there be any logic in them, they convinced his Majesty's Government that it would be necessary to annul the letters patent issued on 31st March, 1905, and make an end of the Lyttelton Constitution. That constitution now passes away into the never never land, into a sort of chilly limbo that is reserved for the discarded and abortive political progeny of many distinguished men. I think I may congratulate the Government and those who support them on the fact that we have been able to take this first most important step in our South African policy with such a very general measure of agreement, with, indeed, a consensus of opinion which almost amounts to unanimity. Both races, every Party, every class, every section in South Africa has agreed in the course which His Majesty's Government have adopted in abandoning representative government and going at once to responsible government. That is already a very great thing, but it was not always so. Hon. Gentlemen who sat in the last Parliament will remember that it was not always so. We remember that Lord Milner was entirely opposed to granting responsible government. We know that Mr. Lyttelton wrote pages and pages in the Blue-book of last year proving how futile and dangerous responsible government would be; and the right hon Member for West Birmingham, who took it as a matter of course on the first day of the present session, made a speech last session in which he indicated in terms of great gravity and force that he thought it was wholly premature to grant responsible government to the Transvaal. But all that is abandoned now. [Cries of "No."] I heard the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, in the name of the Party opposite, accept the policy of His Majesty's Government. I heard the hon. Member for Blackpool this afternoon say that he hoped that responsible government would be given to the Transvaal at the earliest possible moment. In regard to the Orange River Colony, it is quite true that the official Opposition, so far as I gather their view, think that it should be delayed, and should not be given at the same time as to the Transvaal; but that is not the view of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Speaking in the House of Commons on July 27th, 1905, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Objection has also been taken that the same government which is now being given to the Transvaal has not been given to the Orange River Colony. I think that the experiment might have been far better tried in the Orange River Colony. It is quite true that in that Colony there is an enormous majority of the Dutch or Boer population. But they have shown by long experience that they are most capable and moderate administrators—under the admirable rule of President Brand they set an example to the whole of South Africa—and although I think there is some danger in this experiment, it is in the Orange River Colony that I myself would have been inclined, in the first instance, to take the risk.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That was not responsible Government.

*MR. CHURCHILL: It is true the right hon. Gentleman was speaking of representative government; but it cannot be disputed that if an advance were to be made in associating the people of the conquered Colonies with the Government of those Colonies, the right hon. Gentleman thought that it had better be in the Orange River Colony first. But it is incontestable that there is no Party in this country or in the Transvaal that opposes the grant of responsible government to the Transvaal. That is a great advance and shows, at any rate, that we have been able to take our first step with the entire approbation of all concerned. But the opposition, having abandoned their resistance to the grant of responsible government, now contend that on no account must the basis of the Lyttelton constitution be departed from. I am not convinced by that argument. The Government are to pursue a new purpose, but to adhere to the old framework. We are to cut off the head of the Lyttelton constitution, but are to preserve the old trunk and graft a new head on it. I do not believe that any Government, approaching this question from a new point of view, uncompromised and unfettered, would he bound by the framework and details of the Lyttelton constitution. It may be that that constitution contains many excellent principles, but the Government have a right to consider things from the beginning, freshly and freely, to make their own plans in accordance with their own ideas, and to present those plans for the acceptance of the House.

The noble Lord the Member for South Birmingham spoke of the principle of "one vote, one value," which was embodied in the Lyttelton constitution. The principle of "one vote, one value" is in itself an orthodox and unimpeachable principle of democracy. It is a logical, numerical principle. If the attempt be made to discriminate between man and man because one has more children and lives in the country, it would be arguable that we should discriminate because another man has more brains or more money, or lives in the town, or for any other of the many reasons that differentiate one human being from another. The only safe principle, I think, is that all men are equal, and that voting power, as far as possible, should be evenly distributed among them. In the Transvaal the principle of "one vote, one value" can only be made operative upon a basis of voters. In nearly every other country in the world, population is the usual basis of distribution, for population is the same as electorate and electorate the same as population. On both bases the distribution of the constituencies would be the same. There is, for instance, no part of this country which is more married, or more celibate, or more prolific than any other part. It is only in the Transvaal, this country of afflicting dualities and of vicious contradictions, where everything is twisted, disturbed, and abnormal, that there is a great disparity between the distribution of seats on the basis of voters and on the basis of population. The high price of provisions in the towns restricts the growth of urban population, and the dulness and inaccessibility of the country districts appear to be favourable to the growth of large families. It is a scientific and unimpeachable fact that, if you apply the principle of one vote one value to the constitution of the Transvaal, that principle can best be attained —I am not sure that it cannot only be attained—on the basis of voters, and that is the basis Mr. Lyttelton took in the constitution he formed. But Mr. Lyttelton's plan did not stop there. Side by side with this basis of voters he had an artificial franchise of £100 annual value. That is a very much lower qualification in South Africa than it would be in this country, and I do not think that the franchise which Mr. Lyttelton proposed could be called an undemocratic franchise, albeit an artificial franchise, because it yielded 89,000 voters out of a population of 300,000, and that is a much more fertile franchise, even after making allowance for the abnormal conditions of a new country, than we have in this country or than is the case in some American and European States. So that I do not accuse Mr. Lyttelton of having formulated an undemocratic franchise, but taking these two points together—the unusual basis of distribution with the apparently artificial franchise acting and reacting, as they must, one upon the other—I say that there is sufficient ground in these facts to favour the suspicion, at any rate, that something was intended in the nature of a dodge, in the nature of a trick, artificially to depress the balance in one direction and to tilt it in the other. Now I do most respectfully say to the Committee that, in dealing with nationalities, nothing is more fatal than anything like a dodge. Wrongs will be forgotten, sufferings and losses will be forgiven, battles will be remembered only as they recall the memory of the martial virtues of the combatants, but anything like chicane, anything like a trick, will always rankle. The Government are concerned in South Africa not only to do what is fair, but to do what South Africa will accept as fair. They are concerned not merely to choose a balance which will deal evenly between the races, but which will secure the acceptance of both races.

Whatever the amount of good-will the Government may have, we cannot take all these things for granted from our predecessors; we are Philistines rather in regard to their handiwork, We know what money our predecessors have spent, and what a poor result they have produced. We are not inclined to take all that they tell us so glibly on trust. That is the reason why the Government have sent out this Committee of Inquiry to assure us of information on controverted and disputed points, so that the decision we take should not only be the decision of fresh minds, but a decision based on freshly ascertained facts. I recognise the injury which is caused by protracted uncertainty. I recognise the fact and deplore it, and it will be the effort of the Government to curtail by every reasonable means in our power the period of uncertainty and delay. We desire nothing more than that this question shall be settled, and we hope that it will be settled within the course of three or four months. The Committee we have appointed will have other matters to inquire into besides the two questions relating to voters and franchise. There is the position of the inter-Colonial Council, the question of the constitution, if any, of a second Chamber, a question intimately wrapped up with that of some means of safeguarding native interests, a matter for which this country has great obligations. Then there is the question of how we are to endeavour to secure if possible some proper representation of purely labouring forces in Johannesburg as against the capitalist forces which dominate and control the whole of the country. Then there is the question of the Orange River Colony constitution. I feel most strongly that there are few more pathetic spectacles in history than the spectacle of a small republic which lives at peace with its neighbours, which is admirably governed, and which out of motives of generous comradeship amounting to chivalry enters into a war through a promise to its neighbour. It would be intolerable if we were to give to the Transvaal a larger or more generous measure of self-government than we are prepared to extend on the principles of "similarity and simultaneity" to the Orange River Colony. But in the Orange River Colony there are certain obligations which we cannot overlook. In the Transvaal I should suppose that whatever arrangement is come to—and I speak only with the information which the Colonial Office possesses—there must be a British majority, but in the Orange River Colony the situation will be different. There there will undoubtedly be a Dutch majority. That obliges the Government to consider gravely the interests of certain classes to whom we have great obligations. These are, first of all, the National Scouts. I deplore that such men were ever enlisted. I believe it was a great mistake, but it is done, and we cannot wash our hands of the transaction. This is, I think, a matter which the Committee which is just about to start on its journey must consider from the point of view of the general position these men will occupy when the country is once more governed by their fellow-countrymen. Then there is the question which was raised by the hon. Member for Chippenham, and which was referred to by the hon. Member for Westminster and others, namely, the question of land settlement. We have spent a great deal of money on land settlement. We have spent £2,200,000 on settling British subjects in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. We have got rather more than a million pounds worth of land. Some people thought it was worth more than we gave for it and some much less, and for that sum of money 1,500 heads of families have been settled—roughly about 700 in each Colony. I do not think it is very encouraging that we should have spent so much money upon the settlement of so few. I do not know that it is very wise to try and change the character of a country by planting out farmers as if they were orchids. It is not a very encouraging or remunerative or satisfactory process; but the fact that we have spent so much money for not a very great result is no reason for squandering such result as we have obtained. I do not think the Government they will have in the Orange River Colony will view with great enthusiasm a plan for increasing the number of persons who are to vote against their Party's supremacy, and I do not think the Government can make—at any rate, it does not suggest itself to Lord Elgin at the present time that we can make—any arrangement which will provide for an independent flow of British settlers against the will or independent of the action of the responsible Government of that Colony. But to those men already settled on the soil we have a distinct obligation. They have settled on certain conditions not altogether dissimilar to the working of the Irish Land Act; but it makes a great deal of difference in working all schemes of agrarian settlement whether they have a sympathetic or an unsympathetic Government. I think the settlements which have been established in the Orange River Colony, as the hon. Member for the Chippenham Division has well said, will do a great deal to soften the harshness of contact between the British and the Boer farmer, and will add to those amenities and friendliness of life which have answered so well in other parts of the Empire. Therefore, these settlers have a great claim upon our care and attention, and I trust that this may be a matter upon which the Committee will be able to enlighten us. I have no right to commit myself to anything of a definite character, but I know that it is Lord Elgin's earnest desire that means may be devised to secure for settlers already established that sympathetic administration of their holdings which they would have a right to expect had no change in the Government of the Orange River Colony taken place. I wish to say one or two words about the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has said the Committee is going out to make up the minds of the Government for us. Nothing could be a greater travesty or perversion of the real facts. Sir, this is a Committee, it is not a Commission; it is an Imperial patrol, sent out for the purpose of reconnaissance and not of action. When it comes back with information the generals will make the plans of campaign. The Committee will inform the Government of the state of the ground and of the position of the different forces; they will report to the Government and give us their opinion, but the decision will be taken by the executive Government here at home. The idea that the Government should alienate their functions and responsibilities is unthinkable. The responsibility for settling all these vexed questions rests wholly on His Majesty's Government and on no one else in the world, and no one else in the world can relieve them of that responsibility. The right hon. Member for Croydon was good enough to inform the Committee that His Majesty's Government and the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies have ranged themselves with all that is most disloyal in South Africa, and he also stated—he is a master of suave and courtly phrases and is renowned for the exercise of grace and tact in all the offices he has occupied—that the Government is suspect. It would not be surprising if it were suspect considering that the right hon. Gentleman himself informed the nation that its enemies all over the world would rejoice if the Liberal Party secured a majority at the general election. The right hon. Gentleman is always inclined to do himself injustice whenever he speaks in this House. He really possesses a character far more amiable than would be attributed to him if he were judged merely by his public utterances. I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman does not think His Majesty's Government as black as he is inclined to paint them. He knows quite well that the permanence and security of British sovereignty in South Africa cannot be a matter of indifference to His Majesty's Ministers. Surely he does not believe that we could wish to cheat the British race in the Transvaal of any numerical preponderance which may properly belong to them. Equally with him we desire to see the maintenance of British supremacy in South Africa. But we seek to do it by a different method. There is a profound difference, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, between the schools of thought which exist upon South African politics in this House. We think that British authority in South Africa has got to stand on two legs. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have laboured for ten years to make it stand on one. We on this side know that if British dominion is to endure in South Africa it must endure with the assent of the Dutch as well as of the British. We think that the position of the Crown in South Africa, and let me add the position of Agents and Ministers of the Crown in South Africa, should be just as much above and remote from racial feuds as the position of the Crown in this country is above our Party politics. We do not seek to pit one race against the other in the hope of profiting from the quarrel. We hope to build upon the reconciliation and not upon the rivalry of races. We hope that it may be our fortune so to dispose of affairs that these two valiant, strong races may dwell together side by side in peace and amity under the shelter of an equal flag.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said the Committee had listened with interest and in some regards with satisfaction to the speech of the Under-Secretary, who, however, had misunderstood some of the expressions of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham on the question of responsible government for the Transvaal. The late Colonial Secretary said that he would have given representative government to the Orange River Colony first. His hon. friend opposite, however, had forgotten to state that in this House at the beginning of this session the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stated as clearly as he could state that he would not have given responsible government to the Transvaal at all at that time, and he based that statement upon knowledge as solid and profound as any man could have. He based that opinion, firstly, upon his long experience as Colonial Minister for nine years; secondly upon travel in South Africa; and thirdly, upon as wide a knowledge of the working of representative institutions as any man could have who had worked in public offices as his right hon. friend had worked with distinction, with power, and with a knowledge which every responsible Minister on the Ministerial side of the House had at one time or another acknowledged. Upon this question the minds of the people of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony had become thoroughly unsettled by reason of the threat of the veto. He did not press that point in any acrimonious spirit, but that threat had led them to choose what they thought was the least of two evils, namely, complete control of their own affairs even at a premature moment. He wished to refer to the important question of the basis upon which the franchise would be established and the electoral system. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies had suggested that they must not gerrymander, and he had also suggested that it would be a most unfair thing if they permitted a representative system which would place either Party in that country at an advantage over the other by any dodge or trick. He did not think it was suggested that the late Colonial Secretary was guilty of a trick when he laid down as the foundation of the constitution which he was prepared to give one vote one value and voters as the basis for the franchise. It would be absolutely impossible for the British, being in such a large minority, to get any real representation; whereas in the town where the Boers lived together, in Johannesburg, they would be represented because of their position in the municipality. Therefore the principle of one vote one value would work out to the advantage of the Boers in the municipality and to the disadvantage of the British in the rural districts. If the Government would keep in mind this principle they would secure for ever in the Transvaal a natural predominance which would make not only for Imperial interests, but for the security of the Transvaal as a State which should have the spirit of British institutions in all the works of its Legislature. There should be one great nationalising influence from the Zambesi to Table Bay. If they drew off from that influence any of its vital force and impulse they would have nothing to take its place. There was no Boer constitutional tradition, none of those powerful influences which had come from constitutional practice through history and through the centuries. Therefore, there ought to be in the first Legislature granted to the Transvaal predominating British power through numbers. To establish the true constitutional spirit in the Transvaal it was necessary in the first instance to establish a constitution upon preponderating British influence. It would be impossible that members of the former Transvaal Government could rightly interpret the spirit of British institutions. This could also be said of the Orange River Colony. Did the Under-Secretary for the Colonies think it would be possible for those who served in the last Government in the Transvaal to be placed in a position where they could control the destinies of the Transvaal in the first Legislature which was granted to them? He thought that one of the most dangerous things that could possibly be done was to give to the Orange River Colony at the present time full responsible government. He did not suggest that that Colony would be seditious, but they could not expect them so soon after a great war to realise the true spirit of British administration, and they could not expect them to enter upon it with the fullest justice to the British residents there. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] It was too late in the evening to enter upon a discussion of the question of land settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. He ventured to say that even if they secured the rights of those settlers as rigidly as they possibly could, that would not prevent any Government coming into power from altering the local conditions under which they worked, and they all knew what an enormous power there was in the hands of an executive to assist or to disturb and hinder development. The Committee which had been sent out met on a certain Friday and that synchronised with a speech delivered by Mr. Smuts in Pretoria, which he ventured to say was as strong a proclamation of determined resistance to what might be called British solidarity in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony as was ever made before the war. This proclamation was followed by statements elsewhere to the effect that the first thing that would be done if a Dutch Government came into power in the Orange River Colony would be to restore all the old officials—who had naturally left office after the war—to their original positions in the Orange River Colony administration. Their policy was perfectly frank, and it was to restore to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony the old spirit of Boer and Dutch methods of administration. He believed it to be the duty of this House and the Government to see that British institutions were made secure in both those Colonies. He had been freely criticised in regard to a certain Motion for adjournment which was declined, but he was afraid that Motion had been generally misunderstood. In moving that Motion he had in his mind that the instructions given to the Committee were suggestive of concessions to Boer prejudices which would make the Boer stronger in his position. What he wanted to establish was that due consideration should be given to those very things which his hon. friend had so clearly referred to not unsympathetically in his speech. He thanked the House for listening to the suggestions he had made.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again"—(*Mr. Morton*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 6th April, 1906.

TOOK THE OATH.

The Lord Rosmead took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Shrewsbury Corporation Water.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Buenos Ayres Grand National Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [H.L.]; Truro Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Newport Harbour Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Trent Navagation Company Bill [H.L.]: Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Earl of Wicklow and the Lord Teynham be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Faber and the Lord Joicey; read, and agreed to.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Watford Gas Bill; Huddersfield Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in the case, returned from the Commons.

PETITION.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools—

Of parents and guardians of children attending school at Blackrod; Pendleton and Mearly; Worsthorne St. Johns; Newchurch-in-Pendle; Fence; Lanehead; Eccles; Lancaster (4); Bury (3); Kirkham (2); Kenwortham; Bircle; St. Anne's-on-Sea; Walmersley; Bolton; Marton; Little Marton;

Of teachers in schools at Fence; Burnley; Pendleton and Mearley; Blackrod; Lanehead; Lancaster (4); St.-Anne's-on-Sea; Kirkham (2); Edenfield; Marton; Bury (3).

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL.

*Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: My Lords, seeing the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his place, I beg to ask him a question with respect to the Colonial Marriages Amendment Bill, which was promised in the gracious Speech from the Throne. Great anxiety is felt on this subject in our self-governing Colonies, and it certaintly will be satisfactory to those interested if my noble friend can state when the Bill is likely to be introducd.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (The Earl of Elgin): My Lords, this Bill is in preparation, and I hope it will be introduced shortly after Easter.

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE.

Lord MONKSWELL rose to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the following Questions standing in his name on the Paper, viz: 1. Do His Majesty's Government consider that the Financial Reglement as altered by the Porte by the addition of an Ottoman representative to the International Board, and by securing that the financial inspectors under the scheme must be Ottoman subjects, is a satisfactory arrangement;

2. Has the view of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (as stated in a Despatch of January 10th last) that the sanction of the Budgets prepared by the Financial Commission, by Imperial Iradë, is to be a mere formality and is not to delay their prompt and effective application, been accepted by the Porte or the other Powers, and is His Majesty's

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Government prepared to enforce this view;

3. Has the Iradé of sanction for the Budgets for the year, and which had on March 22nd last been submitted to the Porte, been issued, or has the Porte suggested alterations;

4. Have the Commission the right to withhold the salaries of notoriously infamous Judges or Civil servants, or of securing their dismissal, and can they regulate the size of cost of military establishments, and generally what powers do they credit themselves with possessing;

5. Is it the fact, as recently stated in the Press, that the increase in the Customs dues from 8 to 11 per cent. has been agreed to by the Powers, and, if so, under what conditions;

6. Have the Powers now in contemplation a scheme for judicial control, and, if not, will His Majesty's Government lay before them such a proposal in accordance with the view expressed by the Marquess of Lansdowne in a telegram of November 2nd last, in which he stated that "power to supervise the judicial administration" as well as acceptance of the "Reglement" was an "essential condition" of reform; and will His Majesty's Government make it clear that they will put forward more far-reaching proposals if the inadequacy of the present reforms are demonstrated;

7. Have His Majesty's Government in view any means of ameliorating the deplorable condition of affairs in the Adrianople Vilayet;

8. Has any reply been received from the Porte to the Ambassador's Note asking for increased powers for the European Gendarmerie officers who are now without the right to give orders, and can effect no real reform. In this connection, will His Majesty's Government insist on the adoption of all the proposals for the reorganisation of the Gendarmerie contained in that Note;

9. What is the opinion of His Majesty's Government as to the general condition of the country and as to the Gendarmerie reforms; and to move for Papers.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, I did not put these Questions on the Paper on my own initiative. I was approached by the chairman of a very influential committee deeply interested in the welfare of the Balkan Peninsula, and was asked by him to obtain, if possible, a statement from the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs before this House rose for the Easter recess. My answer was that a task of that kind ought to be given to Lord Newton, whose speeches on this subject your Lordships listen to with a great deal of interest, and who is an authority on the matter. But I was told that the noble Lord, who I am glad to see in his place, was otherwise engaged, and that he would not respond to the invitation.

I feel that no apology is necessary on my part for introducing this subject to-day. I think it is just as well that your Lordships' House and the people outside should understand that there are burning and important questions outside South Africa which ought to occupy the very serious attention of Ministers of Parliament and of the public. And I make no apology for the length of the Questions standing in my name on the Paper. They are no doubt of unusual length, but I have gone fully into particulars in order to satisfy the noble Lord the Under-Secretary. He told me that he was extremely anxious to answer fully any Questions that I might put to him, and he begged me to put down my notice of Motion in such a way as to give him the amplest opportunity of looking up the authorities on the various points.

I will venture, notwithstanding the length of my Questions, to make a short supplementary statement in putting them. I do so for this reason. I am perfectly certain that the noble Lord is in earnest when he tells me that he intends to answer very fully any Question that I may ask him. There are one or two matters in connection with these Questions on which I would like a particularly full Answer, and therefore I shall venture to say a few words with regard to them. The noble Lord has an intimate knowlege of this question of South Eastern Europe. He has probably a more intimate knowledge of that question than any other Member of your Lordships' House, not even excepting the late Secretary of State. In these circumstances the noble Lord is not compelled to rely for his Answer on any Memoranda he may receive from the Foreign Office. He knows the question so intimately that his Answer will, I am perfectly certain, be quite full, even though he may not have had the notice of one or two points I intend to press upon him. Not only has my noble friend great knowledge of this question, but he takes a deep humanitarian interest in the affairs of South Eastern Europe, and in that respect he follows in the footsteps of his noble relative, the ex-Foreign Secretary.

I have heard it stated that the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs does not take quite that deep interest in this question that his predecessor took. I hope that is not the case; but if, unfortunately, the present Secretary of State should show any slackness at all in dealing with the Turk I am perfectly certain that my noble friend will push him on with all his might. His Majesty's Government, it seems to me, have a great opportunity before them. They have a much better chance of settling this question than their predecessors had, because the late House of Commons was, I am afraid, somewhat lukewarm with regard to this question. The same cannot be said of the present House of Commons. In that House there are some 126 Members who are deeply pledged to the policy of coercing Turkey, and I believe that a large majority of the Members of the House of Commons are to a very great extent in sympathy with that policy.

I am one of those who think that England has a very special and peculiar duty and obligation with regard to this matter. I do not base that duty and obligation on the Treaty of Berlin. But I think there is a great deal of force in the argument so eloquently addressed to your Lordships last year by the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Rochester, that under the Treaty of Berlin we have a peculiar duty placed on our shoulders. I do not, however, propose to argue that question to-night, as I know it is a matter of controversy. I say that there is another reason, and to my mind a perfectly sufficient and good reason, why England should be in the van in regard to this question of coercing Turkey and seeing that the victims of Turkish misrule are not maltreated in the future. It is the tradition of this country always to be in the van in any question of this sort. We are the most freedom-loving nation in the world; we also pride ourselves on being the best governed and the most humanitarian nation in the world. We can hardly open *The Times* newspaper without seeing a leading article which extols England and everything English to the skies, which does not harp on the great superiority of Englishmen over every other nationality; and, for my part, I think that this praise of the superiority of England is carried sometimes to a mischievous and extravagant extent, and an extent that must be very galling to foreign nations. But, my Lords, I am an Englishman, and I do most honestly believe that the English nation is the most freedom-loving nation, the best-governed nation, and the most humanitarian nation in the world, and that it is the duty of England to be in the forefront in matters of this kind. I ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to keep up the high standard of English tradition in this matter.

Now I come to my Questions. The first five relate to financial control. This is a matter of absolutely vital inportance. If any reforms are to be carried through satisfactorily they must rest first of all upon financial control. That was Lord Lansdowne's view. Lord Lansdowne said time after time that it was absolutely necessary, if any real reforms were to be adopted, that there should be an effective and fairly complete control over Macedonian finances. I ask the House to consider for a moment whether the Règlement—that is, the agreement between the Powers and Turkey with regard to the regulation of Turkish finance—does or does not give an efficient control over the finances of Macedonia. This Règlement is not in the form in which it was originally presented to Turkey by the Powers. As it was originally presented Turkey most energetically protested against it. The result was that we had to have a naval demonstration, and were compelled to occupy Turkish territory in order to wring from them any concession at all. Having put ourselves to the trouble and expense of this naval demonstration, the extraordinary thing is that we allowed the Turks to amend the Règlement in two most important particulars.

One of the clauses that the Turks managed to get inserted in the Reglement, was to the effect that one of the Commismissioners who had to look after the Macedonian finances in conjunction with the Commissioners of the Powers should be a Turk. It does seem to me that this Turkish Commissioner will render the task of other Commissioners a great deal more difficult than it otherwise would have been. This Turkish Commissioner will probably use all the influence he possesses in favour of delay and obstruction, and I think it is highly probable that he will be put there for no other purpose. I may say, in passing, that the Reglement does not seem to be very clearly worded. I have looked over it several times myself, and I must say that if it were a document that would come before the English courts, it would give a great deal of occupation both to His Majesty's judges and to counsel.

Let us suppose that the Reglement is constructed in such a way as to meet our wishes. How is it to be carried out? I have told your Lordships that there is to be a Turkish Commissioner. But not only that. The inspectors who are to report to the Commission, and on whose report the Commissioners must to a very considerable extent rely, are not only to be Turkish subjects, but they are to be Turkish subjects who are agreeable to the Ottoman Ministry. I can scarcely imagine any better means of reducing the Reglement to a nullity. I cannot understand, after having taken all these pains to coerce the Turk, why the Powers did not insist on every one of their conditions being accepted by the Turkish Government.

There is another matter in connection with finance which is of the greatest importance. The Turks for years have been trying to get the consent of the Powers to increase the customs dues from 8 to 11 per cent. That is a very serious matter to English commerce, which is 60 per cent. of the whole commerce of Turkey. Lord Lansdowne over and over again said it would be impossible for a British Government to consent to this increase except under very stringent conditions indeed. That is such an important matter that I venture to quote from Lord Lansdowne's despatch on page 69 of the recently-issued Blue-book. It is a Memorandum communicated to Musurus Pasha on October 28th last year, and in it we read—

"In reply to the proposal from the Sublime Porte, which was communicated by Musurus Pasha on the 15th February last, that the customs duties of the Ottoman Empire should be increased from 8 to 11 per cent. *ad valorem* in order to meet the deficit in the Budget which had been prepared for the three Macedonian vilayets, Lord Lansdowne addressed a note to his Excellency on the 27th of that month stating the conditions which his Majesty's Government considered indispensable before they could assent even in principle to this proposal. These conditions were, briefly, that His Majesty's Government should be satisfied that the financial needs of the Macedonian provinces had been correctly computed by the Turkish officials; that the local revenues were collected to the best advantage; that the expenditure, both civil and military, was adjusted to the real needs of the Administration; that the customs generally would be administered in such a manner as to secure honest and efficient collection of the duties, and that there should be a definite assignment of the proceeds of the increased Tariff to some competent authority intrusted with the collection and control not only of these funds, but of the local revenues which they are intended to supplement."

On looking back to the despatch of February 27th last year, I find that Lord Lansdowne made one or two conditions that are not contained in this later Memorandum. For instance, he stated then that the Customs House accommodation was scandalous and must be improved. That was one of the conditions. And again he used these words—

"It is impossible to form a judgment as to the financial position until it has been ascertained whether the expenditure incurred in maintaining the large military force at present employed in Macedonia cannot be confined in more reasonable limits. His Majesty's Government regard this question as one of primary importance."

As to this there is no difference of opinion whatever between the late Secretary of State and the present Secretary of State, for on December 22nd last Sir Edward Grey, in a Memorandum communicated to Musurus Pasha, states that—

"His Majesty's Government are unable to consent to the proposed increase in the customs duties, except on the conditions formulated in Lord Lansdowne's Memorandum to Musurus Pasha of the 28th October. In view of the preponderance of British trade interests, it would be impossible for His Majesty's Government to modify this attitude."

There have been very disquieting rumours in the Press to the effect that His Majesty's Government have modified this attitude, and that the Powers, including ourselves, have agreed to this increase. I hope this is not so.

The sixth Question standing in my name on the Paper relates to judicial control. As to that, Lord Lansdowne was also extremely, and very properly, if I may say so, emphatic. The noble Marquess stated on November 2nd last year, just before the naval demonstration, that—

> "If the Powers are driven to measures of coercion, we agree with the view expressed in your telegram of the 28th ultimo, that they should reconsider their demands. Unless this is done, the Porte, in any difficulties which may arise hereafter, will be encouraged to persist in their obstruction up to the last moment. You should press this view upon your colleagues."

Yet we find that after this naval demonstration His Majesty's Government consented to remodel this Reglement very much in favour of the Turk. Lord Lansdowne, in his despatch of November 2nd last year, went on to say—

> "The essential conditions appear to us to be the acceptance of the Reglement, and the power to supervise the judicial administration."

I should like to know whether we have insisted on the power to supervise the judicial administration, and, if so, whether we have got it.

On my seventh Question, which deals with the Vilayet of Adrianople, I have only to say that it is high time something was done. That I know has been a matter of great difficulty. The Powers have contended that you must first of all deal with Macedonia before you deal with any place outside, but this Vilayet is in such a frightful state of disorder that I cannot imagine His Majesty's Government will allow matters to continue long as they are.

Question No. 8 has reference to the Gendarmerie. I fully recognise that as regards the Gendarmerie some real progress seems to have been made, but a very great deal remains to be done. We were informed, in a Reuter telegram which appeared in *The Times* on March 24th, after the publication of the Blue-book, that the Note dealing with the Macedonian Gendarmerie handed to the Porte on March 5th by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Ambassadors stated that General de Giorgis, commander of the Gendarmerie, and the Military Attaches of the six Powers, had summarised their proposals on the subject of the steps to be taken to expedite the reorganisation of the force under four heads. The first head was—

> "The recognition of the right of intervention of the Gendarmerie in all cases of crimes and illegalities, by whomsoever committed, is indispensable to the good administration of the country."

That condition was put in for this reason—that Hilmi Pasha had recently declared that the Gendarmerie could not intervene against military or Government officials without special instructions. Therefore there was very good reason for that condition. The second head was—

> "To demand that every gendarme shall be armed, with the least possible delay, with a quick-firing carbine and a revolver."

It seems that under the present system only old Martinis are used, and they are inferior to the weapons of well-armed inhabitants. That condition also seems a very necessary one. The third head was—

> "It is desirable that steps should be taken to ensure strict and uniform application of the regulations concerning the carrying of arms to every section of the population."

It seems that at present certain persons are privileged to carry arms without a licence. That privilege certainly ought to be done away with. The fourth head was—

> "Authorisation for the printing of instruction hand-books for the use of all commanders of Gendarmerie posts."

This is a very necessary reform, because it is stated that at the present time these instructions are couched in language entirely over the head of the Gendarmerie, who cannot understand a word of what they are told to do. It seems that although the new regulations have been printed the Turkish Government will not allow them to be circulated. I hope I shall hear that all those conditions have been, or are very shortly to be, complied with. My last Question is one to which I am sorry to say I can pretty well anticipate the Answer. I ask what the opinion of His Majesty's Government is as to the general condition of the country and as to the Gendarmerie reforms. It appears to me that the only opinion that can be vouchsafed by His Majesty's Government is the old old story that things are going on pretty much as they have gone on in the past. But I do hope that my noble friend will be able to throw some encouraging light on the subject. I beg to move.

Moved, for Papers.—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, the noble Lord who has initiated this debate has put a series of Questions on the Paper upon matters of detail, all of which are really comprehended in the last Question, in which the noble Lord inquires what is the opinion of His Majesty's Government with regard to the general condition of the country. Since we last discussed this subject in your Lordships' House there has been an enormous amount of correspondence. There have been a vast number of protests, Notes have passed, there have been audiences, Iradés have been issued, and Reglements drawn up, and there has even been a naval demonstration, which culminated in the acceptance by the Porte of the Financial Commission. All this makes an extremely imposing show on paper. But if we go to the root of the matter, and if, instead of studying the triumphs of international diplomacy as recounted by Ambassadors and Ministers, we pass to the despatches which are written by the Consuls who live in Macedonia itself, it very soon becomes apparent to the densest understanding that there has been practically no change at all.

After all, the main question, and what concerns everybody in this country and everywhere else, is the actual condition of the country. I have not the smallest doubt in my own mind that if I were to return to that country to-morrow I should find precisely the same state of things as I found about two years ago—that is to say, I should find the same amount of uncertainty and insecurity both of life and property, the same race hatred, and, in short, what may be termed the same anarchical conditions, except the one small improvement with regard to the Gendarmerie. I really do not think that I am exaggerating when I say that at the present rate of so-called progress it would take fifty years to bring Macedonia into the condition of an ordinary civilised and progressive State.

By far the most illuminating document in the Blue-book which has lately been presented to Parliament appears on pages 38 and 39, in the despatch from Sir N. O'Conor to the Foreign Office. As your Lordships are well aware, the main feature in Macedonia at the present moment is the perpetual and indiscriminate massacre of each other by the rival races which inhabit that country, and this feature has now become so pronounced, it is so recognised as a habitual feature in the life of that country, that we are now apparently actually able to classify, shedule, and table these murders until they appear almost in the form of a Board of Trade return dealing with, say, aliens or the question of exports and imports.

Under table "A," showing the number killed by komitajis, I find set out separately the number of Christians killed by Bulgarian komitajis, of Moslems killed by Bulgarian komitajis, of Christians killed by Greek komitajis, of Moslems killed by Servian komitajis, and of Christians killed by Servian komitajis. Table "B" goes on to show the number of troops killed by various bands, the number of Bulgar komitajis killed by troops, and the number of Greek and Serb komitajis killed by troops. All the figures are given, and we have further tables showing the number of Christians murdered by Moslems and of Christians killed during military operations. But these figures, when added up, do not amount to an extraordinarily large number. They reach a total of something like 800 for eight months, which is, I might say, almost a beggarly number considering the condition of things in that country. As is pointed out in the Blue-book these are only official figures, and the great majority of crimes of this kind are never traced at all. That despatch gives a thoroughly sound idea of the condition of the country at the present moment. What an instructive commentary this is upon three or four years of so-called European control in Macedonia!

If anyone asks why this discreditable, I might almost say shameful, state of things is allowed to go on I think the answer is perfectly plain. It may seem a somewhat brutal thing to say, but I think we must face the fact that the reason why this state of things continues is that really nobody, except the unfortunate victims and those persons who in this country and other countries are animated by genuine sympathy, are particularly anxious for a radical change. I will admit, with the noble Lord who started this discussion, that there are a number of persons in this country who do feel genuine sympathy for oppressed nationalities, not only in Turkey but in other parts of the world. I have no doubt that there are many such persons, though not so numerous, in France, and they exist also, no doubt in Italy; and it is perfectly true that the neighbouring States profess extreme solicitude for the welfare of their brethren and co-religionists who still inhabit the Turkish Empire and are still Turkish subjects. At the same time these neighbouring nationalities would certainly not be satisfied with a peaceful solution of the question unless their own political aspirations were gratified.

Then if we come to the other countries interested—namely, Austria, Germany, and Russia—I do not think it can be honestly contended that in any of those countries, on the part of the Government, at all events, is there any over-powering desire to bring about any radical change in European Turkey. I next come to the Turks themselves, and I need not waste any words on their view of the case, because it is perfectly obvious that the kind of alteration, the kind of radical change, which is demanded by the noble Lord and others in the country known as Macedonia implies a state of things which means at the same time their own annihilation as a governing Power. Therefore it is perfectly clear that you cannot expect any sincere desire for change on the part of the Turks themselves.

The noble Lord has asked for information upon a variety of details connected with the Financial Commission, the increase of duties, and other matters, and he has complained of the way in which the original proposals of the Powers have been whittled away. I must say that, for my part, I feel very considerable doubt whether, even supposing everything put forward by the Powers had been accepted in its entirety by the Porte, if the Reglement as it was originally drawn up had been carried out exactly as it was intended, if, as I say, the powers of the Financial Commission had not been diminished in any sort of way, any definite or permanent improvement would have been brought about. I confess that to my mind the situation appears as nearly hopeless as it well can.

What you have in Macedonia, and I do not think this is generally recognised, is nominal, but not really effective, European control. It is complicated by the jealousies and ambitions of neighbouring states, and that alone constitutes a fairly hopeless position. The result is that you get a compromise which satisfies no one. I doubt even if it satisfies the present Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Not only does it not satisfy anybody, but it creates a feeling of uncertainty, it arouses false hopes, and it causes perpetual discord and all the consequences which follow from such a state of affairs. If a permanent settlement is really aimed at, the best chance would have been, as probably everybody recognises, if all branches of the administration could have been really placed under European control. But it is quite obvious that there is no Power or combination of Powers inclined to go so far as that. The noble Lord who initiated this discussion intimated that in his opinion we possess the best Government in the world, a statement which I, sitting on these benches, am not prepared to accept implicitly at the present moment.

LORD MONKSWELL: I said they were very much in earnest with regard to this particular question.

LORD NEWTON: I was coming to that. The noble Lord added that there were a number of persons of the same view as the 126 Members of the House of Commons, who represent the best Government in the world, and that we are, therefore, entitled to insist upon the expulsion of the Turks from their European provinces. I do not know that this constitutes a sufficient ground for the expulsion of anybody, but, even supposing it did, I do not see how the noble Lord and his 126 friends in the other House are going to effect their purpose.

LORD MONKSWELL: I did not say the Turks were to be expelled. I used the word coerced.

LORD NEWTON: I distinctly understood the noble Lord to urge His Majesty's Government to take energetic steps in order, if necessary, to drive the Turks out of Macedonia. I am afraid the noble Lord and his friends would find themselves in a very small minority; and I have never been able myself to see the force of any argument which endeavoured to prove that it was our special duty to carry out this policy, and I do not think I ever shall. The noble Lord added that the present Government were in a much more hopeful position than the last, for the purpose of effecting a real and genuine improvement in Macedonia.

I must confess I entirely fail to share this hopeful view. Macedonia is at this moment passing through a transition stage. Though it is extremely rash to predict the future, yet I confess that I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that this is one of those questions which will have to be settled, to use a phrase of Prince Bismarck, by blood and iron. I do not think that it will be settled by anything short of war. For that reason I much regret to express the opinion that all the reforms upon which international diplomacy is so laboriously occupied at the present moment are little better than mere palliatives, and in any case will not serve, whatever temporary benefit they may achieve, to avert an eventual catastrophe in that part of the world.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, I do not think that anybody can complain of the action of my noble friend, either in bringing forward the question of Macedonia or in having brought it forward in the shape of what I may call, if I may use a legal expression, a file of interrogatories; for only a few days ago I laid on the Table of the House a voluminous Blue Book, and I quite anticipated that attention would be called to it as has been the case when previous Blue Books have been presented.

My noble friend has been so kind as to allude to the fact that some years ago I was very intimately connected in a practical way with this question. But while thanking my noble friend for not forgetting whatever small service I may have rendered when I had the honour of being Her late Majesty's Commissioner under the Treaty of Berlin, I regret that the compliment was accompanied by what I may call a rather left-handed compliment at the expense of the Secretary of State. I can assure my noble friend that there is no difference of view upon this question at all in the ranks of His Majesty's Government, and if the language of my right hon. friend in reply to some Questions in the other House and to some deputations of a *quasi*-private character that have called upon him has not appeared perhaps quite as warm in its character as the questioners may have wished or expected, I can only ask him and his friends to remember how very great is the responsibility of a Secretary of State, and to bear in mind the excellent old proverb that "still waters run deep."

I now pass to the series of Questions which my noble friend has placed on the Paper. He has very truly said that the first five are all more or less connected, because they touch upon the question of finance. But some of them relate to questions of fact which it is comparatively easy for me to answer, and others relate to matters of opinion which are far more difficult to answer. For example, in the first Question I am asked whether His Majesty's Government consider that the Financial Règlement as altered by the Porte by the addition of an Ottoman representative to the International Board, and by securing that the financial inspectors under the scheme must be Ottoman subjects, is a satisfactory arrangement. In regard to that Question, I think no one who reads the Blue-book which is in the possession of your Lordships can fail to see that the late Government, between whom and the present Government there is absolutely no difference of opinion at all in regard to this matter, yielded on these points with regret, and not only because they had to face the opposition which every British Government has to face from the Turkish Government in regard to these proposals, but because they were not in a position to command what in a matter of this kind is absolutely necessary for success—the general support of their European colleagues. Undoubtedly the position of the Commission has to a certain extent, though I do not think in any vital manner, been weakened by the two concessions which were made, and which are referred to in the noble Lord's first Question.

Then I am asked—and here I come to the region of responsibility of the present Government—whether the despatch of Sir Edward Grey of January 10th last, stating that the sanction of the Budgets prepared by the Financial Commission, by Imperial Iradé, is to be a mere formality, and is not to delay their prompt and effective application, has been accepted by the Porte or the other Powers, and whether His Majesty's Government are prepared to enforce this view. In regard to that very important matter, I think the fact that that despatch bears the signature of Sir Edward Grey ought to have prevented my noble friend from making the suggestion which he made just now, because it shows that directly Sir Edward Grey came into office he put his finger on a point which he did think, and in my opinion very rightly thought, might be of special danger, and he had not been at the Foreign Office a month before he wrote what I venture to tell your Lordships is one of the most important despatches in the Blue Book. It is not necessary, nor would it be desirable in my opinion, that we should ask the Porte or the Powers whether they agree with us in the view expressed in that despatch, because it is a plain statement of fact. We put on record our opinion that there ought not to be delay. Does anyone doubt that the other great Powers of Europe would entirely agree with us in that view, seeing that their diplomacy has suffered just as much as ours at Constantinople by the endless delays of the Porte?

I remember that at the time when I was a Commissioner at Constantinople, after the Treaty of Berlin, my responsibility extended to Crete as well as to the European provinces. The first thing I found was that a very talented Greek, Photiades Pasha, governor of the Island, came to Constantinople to implore my aid and advice because the Sultan had declined to issue the Iradé for Crete, and the whole of the finances of that Island at that time were actually one year in arrear, because it was impossible to get the signature of the Sultan to the Iradé. Does my noble friend believe that the Secretary of State and myself, having recollection of these facts, will consider it necessary to wait for the approval of the Porte, or even of the Powers, to express a very plain opinion to the Porte if we find that no notice is taken of what Sir Edward Grey has stated in this despatch?

The next Question of the noble Lord has reference to the Iradé of sanction for the Budgets for the year. We are waiting for information on this subject, but at the moment the sanction, so far as we know, has not been received. But, of course, we are watching the question closely. On that I cannot say more.

The noble Lord then asks whether the Macedonian Commission have the right to withhold the salaries of notoriously infamous Judges or Civil servants, or of securing their dismissal; whether they can regulate the size or cost of military establishments, and generally what powers they credit themselves with possessing. If the intention is to ask as to what powers in general the Commission credit themselves with possessing, I can only say that it is impossible to answer so vague an inquiry.

It would be the safest course to say that the powers are laid down in the documents contained in the Blue-book. I cannot go further than that. My noble friend will see that, with regard to the dismissal of Judges and Civil servants and matters of that kind, bearing on the judicial and military establishments, the Commission have not received any authority or jurisdiction. The Commission are a financial body, and their powers are those of financial supervision, and to a certain extent of financial administration.

The question as to the increase in the Customs dues undoubtedly bears upon an exceedingly interesting and important matter, because it touches the administration of the European provinces of Turkey, and it also affects British commerce. I cannot on this occasion go beyond what the Secretary of State said in another place a few days ago. Negotiations have been proceeding for some time past between the Foreign Office and the Porte, and also with the other Powers, with regard to this very important subject. I can, however, add this much, that it is the earnest desire and hope of the Foreign Office that in any permission given to the Porte to impose duties they may succeed in attaching to their consent certain improvements in the general administration of the Customs duties at the ports, in the laws relating to mining and other matters, and also that they may succeed in some way in bringing the increase of the Customs duties into connection with the financial administration of the different vilayets, so as to make certain that this increase, or in any case a considerable share of it, shall find its way into the provincial Budgets, and shall be used, not for the purposes of waste, for which the Turkish financial administration is, I am sorry to say, too famous, but shall really be used for the benefit of the long-oppressed subjects of the Sultan in Macedonia and elsewhere. I am sure that your Lordships will not wish, at a moment when, as I have said, delicate negotiations are going on, not only with the Porte but with the other Powers, that I should go beyond what I have said.

The next question of the noble Lord relates to the scheme for judicial control. On that point I would refer noble Lords to No. 110 in the Blue-book, page 74. There will be found the statement of the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, expressing the wish of both sides of the House, as to extending the Règlement from the financial to the judicial part of the administration. But there, again, we were not able to find the same zeal and the same interest elsewhere in the cause of reform as has actuated this House and this nation irrespective of Party. My noble friend opposite, who knows this Question so intimately, in the speech which he made last year indicated the difficulties which had to be encountered by this country owing to the comparative indifference of the other great Powers. Unless this country is prepared to take stronger military and naval measures, unless we obtain the consent of the other Powers, we can do practically little or nothing, and therefore our success must be conditioned by the degree in which we obtain the consent of the other Powers, especially of the neighbouring powers of Austria and Russia.

The noble Lord next asked a Question as to whether His Majesty's Government have in view any means of ameliorating the deplorable condition of affairs in the Adrianople vilayet. There, again, a despatch appears in the Blue-book from Lord Lansdowne, in which he expressed the opinion that it would be desirable to extend these reforms—financial, judicial, or whatever they are—to the vilayet of Adrianople. Bearing in mind that the terms of the reforms in Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin were to apply to the vilayet of Adrianople, I do not see how any other course could possibly have been taken by the late Secretary of State; and if the Government are enabled to find support for the views expressed by Lord Lansdowne in the despatch, we will lose no opportunity we shall have of urging them. But I do not desire to hold out any expectations that we are not able to fulfil, and therefore I am impelled to speak in the language of caution.

The next Question of the noble Lord has reference to increased powers for the European *gendarmerie* officers. The proposals on this subject have been read to the House by the noble Lord, and it is obvious that they represent the common-sense of the situation. How can the *gendarmerie* be of use if it is not, for example, properly armed? How can it be of use if the humblest zaptieh in the service of the Porte is able to oppose his jurisdiction to that of the *gendarmerie*? My noble friend may therefore be perfectly certain that any steps the Government can take to strengthen and secure the position of the *gendarmerie* will be taken. At the same time I am bound to point out that there is a dangerous vagueness in the wording of the most important of its recommendations, because the *gendarmerie* are asking for what is called "the right of intervention." I do not wish to be pedantic, but the general right of intervention is to my mind a phrase or rather dangerous vagueness. The Foreign Office will take the course of reducing this general expression to terms which could be enforced, but this will naturally be a matter of some time.

Lastly, the noble Lord asks another Question of dangerous latitude—namely, the opinion of the Government as to the general condition of the country and as to the *gendarmerie* reforms. The Answer of the Foreign Office, so far as we can give it, is contained in the Blue-book, which comes up to the month of January this year. I do not think that I can well be expected to make any material addition to it, considering that this is but the first week of April. I desire, however, at the same time to say that there has been some slight improvement in the condition of the country. The Financial Commission which has been called into existence under the Reglement is no doubt working exceedingly hard and is taking its duties seriously. That I can assure the House is the case. At the same time I feel how very slow progress is in these matters, and I could not honestly contradict the view put forward by the noble Lord that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

When I recall that this question in almost all its present forms has been going on for more than twenty-five years, I do not complain of those who, perhaps not realising all the difficulties of the case, are inclined to be impatient. But I ask your Lordships to believe that, like our predecessors in office, we are anxious to lose no opportunity of pushing forward these reforms. In regard to the Secretary of State, I ask permission to read a short letter which by his direction has been written by the Foreign Office to a large and influential body of Members of the House of Commons who approached him on this question—

> "I am to assure you that His Majesy's Government are fully alive to the necessity of still further improving the administration of Macedonia. They will do all that lies in their power to secure the amelioration of the condition of the inhabitants of the three vilayets, and they are glad to be assured that such a policy will, as opportunity offers, receive the support of the House of Commons."

And I am sure that it will receive the support also of the House of Lords—

> "Progress in the direction desired must necessarily depend to a large extent on the view taken by the other European Powers of the situation in Macedonia, and of the measures which it is advisable to adopt; but the various Governments concerned are aware that in every effort to promote reforms they can rely on the sympathy and co-operation of His Majesty's Government."

I may add that the hands of the Government are now comparatively free, owing to the successful termination of other important negotiations which rather hampered the hands of the late Government. I can hardly imagine that any Member of your Lordships' House would think that at a moment when there were grave anxieties on the shores of the African sea, near the Straits of Gibraltar, the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would have been justified in running the risk of coming into a marked difference of opinion, almost a collision, with other Powers on the shores of the Bosphorus also. But now that we are clear, as I think we practically are, of those other difficulties, the present Secretary of State will have the great advantage of being able to give a more undivided attention to those matters as to which, perhaps, I have trespassed too long on your Lordships' attention.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, I think it is a little unfortunate that longer notice was not given of the raising of a subject of this great magnitude, because, if it had, I am sure my noble friend Lord Lansdowne would have made a point of being present and taking part in the discussion. The notice that the noble Lord intended raising this debate only appeared on the Paper two days ago, and the noble Marquess the late Foreign Secretary had made arrangements which at that time it was impossible for him to forego. I was very glad to hear the statement of my noble friend who has just sat down that His Majesty's present Government were practically adopting and carrying on the policy of the late Government.

There is one point upon which I would like some information. I do not know whether my noble friend is satisfied, but I assume we may take it that His Majesty's Government are satisfied, that, under the arrangements that are being made with reference to the increase in the Customs dues, this country will obtain an efficient *quid pro quo*. We cannot afford to assent to that increase unless there is something really definite to be obtained as a return. The matter is not an unimportant one, and it has been pressed not only by the late Foreign Secretary, but by the present Government. We ought to bear in mind, in regard to this matter, that it is possible to press perhaps a little too much for what I may call paper reforms. Reforms may look well on paper and yet not produce much effect, but without these paper reforms something practical may be carried out which may lead to the amelioration of the condition of the country.

Whatever may be our desire as to pressing for reforms no one suggests that we should act absolutely by ourselves so far as force is concerned. We must associate ourselves with the European Concert and try and keep it intact. If we dissociate ourselves from the other Powers, I assume that the only difference would be that there would be no further reforms, and a great many of those already conceded would become inoperative. The responsibility, of course, must rest with the Government as to how far, and at what time, they can press for reform. There may be moments, as the noble Lord has foreshadowed, more convenient than others for pressing our opinions. So long as we are satisfied that His Majesty's Government are endeavouring to obtain the right reforms, and I think the noble Lord has satisfied us that that is the case, I trust we shall not unduly press the Government as to the ways and means of carrying them out.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: My Lords, as regards the Customs dues, I think I stated in the course of my observations that His Majesty's Government are fully intending to attach to any consent they may give to the increase of those dues the enforcement of certain reforms which the previous Government had for long been pressing on the Porte, in regard, for example, to such matters as the condition of ports of entry, the regulations relating to mining, and various matters of that kind. There is also to be borne in mind the fact that under previous arrangements it was perfectly well known and recognised by the Great Powers that a certain portion of any increase of Customs dues was ear-marked for the benefit of the holders of the Ottoman Debt, and had to be paid over to what is known as the Debt Commission, on which certain European members sit. They do not sit officially, but are servants of the Sublime Porte. That is a matter of very great moment, and may possibly lend itself to being the means of securing better administration of any increased revenues. More than that I cannot say at present.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I should like to say, with regard to the complaint of the noble Earl opposite, that longer notice had not been given of the raising of this question, that it was only a week ago that I was approached on the matter. I did my best to put the Questions in order at the earliest possible moment, and I think your Lordships will find that they were down on Tuesday's Paper. I do not desire to press my Motion for Papers. I have no doubt that Papers will be forthcoming at the proper time, and I ask leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to continue in force for another six years the Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1904. The Act has worked admirably, and I trust your Lordships will see your way to give it a new lease of life.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2^a.—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday, the 30th inst.

THE ALGECIRAS CONFERENCE.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, before the House adjourns over the Easter recess, I should like to ask the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give your Lordships any information with regard to the results of the Algeciras Conference. I should like at the same time to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any information he can give your Lordships with regard to the outbreak in Natal.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: My Lords, it is very natural, as the House is about to adjourn for some time, that this Question should be asked. I naturally feel, and I am sure the House will feel, that I must weigh my words rather carefully, because the formal conclusion of the Conference has not yet taken place. Nevertheless, there is no reason why I should cast any doubt on the confident and favourable anticipations which have appeared in the Press during the last few days, that the signature of the final protocol of the Conference will take place, if not to-morrow, at a very early date. I, for the same reason, cannot enter into any details; but I think I may say this much, that whenever it may be my good fortune to be allowed to lay any Papers on the Table of the House containing the final Act of the Conference, I think your Lordships will agree that the phrase which has been very frequently used—namely, that in this Conference there have been neither victors nor vanquished, expresses the truth of the situation.

I think your Lordships will also find that the records of the Conference will show that it affords a fresh guarantee of the maintenance of harmonious action between the Powers and a valuable further step in the long process of the restoration of the southern shores of the Mediterranean to order and progress. In regard to the action of this country, I also cannot say more than this, that we have desired to maintain continuity of policy with the action of the late Government, and that in so doing we have acted both in the letter and in the spirit of the agreement of 1904 with France. We believe that that co-operation will still further strengthen our good relations with that country, and will maintain the peace and harmony of the world. I make the latter observation with all the greater pleasure, because I have sometimes observed with regret that there are some persons who seem to imagine that if you are on good terms with one Power you must be on bad terms with another. That is not so. I noticed the other day a passage in a very interesting and able speech by Prince Bülow in the German Parliament, in which he remarked—

> "Europe is a house in which each one of us is living—more or less comfortably—according to the time and our position there. But we all have a common interest—to consolidate our household, and to strengthen the building which gives us all shelter."

I have mentioned the name of Prince Bülow, and I could not resume my seat without expressing the deep sympathy which I am sure we all feel with that illustrious statesman, and with the German nation, whose Minister he is, in the sudden illness which has befallen him. We have read the account in the newspapers of the day. One of the most remarkable scenes in the annals of your Lordships' House—it has often been the theme of the painter and historian—is when Lord Chatham, at the end of a famous speech on colonial policy, fell down fainting among the colleagues who surrounded him. At that time the heart of the German nation went out in spirit and in sympathy towards this country and the great Minister who had been associated with the policy of Frederick the Great. After an interval of 128 years, under circumstances strikingly similar, I think the heart of the British nation will go out to the Chancellor of the German Empire and to the German nation in the time of their trouble, which in such a striking manner must recall the scene which many years ago was enacted in this House.

A great European conference is always a picturesque gathering, but to the Conference at Algeciras, apart even from other circumstances, a peculiar interest was given by the reappearance at the council table of European diplomacy, after a long interval, of a veteran foreign statesman, associated with the brilliant days of Italy, when she was asserting her right to unite and take her legitimate place among the Great Powers. I need hardly say that I allude to the Marchese Visconti Venosta, whose appearance at Algeciras was, I think, one of the causes of the success of the Conference. If I pay a passing tribute to the venerable figure whose presence recalled the triumphs and difficulties of an earlier day, we, my Lords, may be proud to think that in the British Plenipotientary, Sir Arthur Nicolson, there has been found one who has proved himself to be a worthy inheritor of the wisdom of an older day and also the equal of any among the younger school of European diplomacy. The debt of this country, and I may add of Europe, to Sir Arthur Nicolson is great. He is about to leave Spain for a higher post than he now fills. To the banks of the Neva he will take the laurels gathered on the shores of the Mediterranean, but they will not wither.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, in answer to the second Question asked by the noble Earl opposite, I have to say that there is no further information beyond what has been already published with regard to affairs in Natal.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Monday the 30th instant, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 6th April, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of

Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred to the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz:—Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Huddersfield Coporation Bill. Read the third time and passed. Bacup Corporation Bill, Cardiff Gas Bill, Great Eastern Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Todmorden Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

County of Aberdeen (Monymusk Bridge and Road) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Bath, Cheshunt, Hove (two), Nantwich, Oystermouth, and Tamworth (Rural)," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referrred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 154.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Ashton-in-Makerfield, Cardigan, Darlington, Hoylake and West Kirby, Plymouth, Salford, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Totnes, and Tyldesley-with-Shakerly," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 155.]

LONDOL GOVERNMENT SCHEMES (LONDON AND PENGE, &c.) BILL.

"To confirm certain Schemes made under The London Government Act, 1899, relating to the county of London and Penge, the county of London and Hornsey, the county of London and Barnes, and the counties of London and Kent," presented by Mr. Runciman; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 156.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for extending the period limited by The Knot End Railway Act, 1898, for the construction and completion of the railway by that Act authorised; and for other purposes." [Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intitled, "An Act to authorise the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to construct additional dock and other works; and for other purposes." [Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords].

Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Aberdeenshire; Birkenhead; Bristol; Chester; Kirkcaldy and other places; Leith; Manchester and Salford; Salford; and, Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, Limited; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS.

Petition from Oldham, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Petition from Broughton in Furness, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Abercromby; Altrincham; Birmingham (two); Ealing; Fabian Society; Feltham; Mile End (five); North West London; St. Pancras; South Paddington (two); Strand; West London (two); West of Scotland Women's Liberal Association; and, Women's Liberal Unionist Association; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION.

Petition from Whitehaven, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; From Abbotts Ann; Alkborough; Ambergate; Anmer; Ashton under Lyne (two); Astwood; Bagendon; Bainton (two); Barking; Barton Stacey; Bath; Bedstone; Beswick; Beverston; Blackley (two); Blaxhall; Blunsden St. Leonard; Bolton; Botley (two); Bovinger; Braceborough (two); Bradshaw; Brent Knoll; Brockdish; Broome; Broughton cum Borrington; Broughton in Furness; Bury St. Chads; Bury St. Peter's; Calne; Cardiff; Carnforth (two); Chailey; Cheltenham; Cherry Willingham; Clapham; Claverton; Clevdon; Copley; Croxton; Darwen (three); Derby; Duston; Easton; Ebrington; Eccles (three); Elford; Eltham; Faccombe; Finchingfield; Fisherton Delamere; Formby; Fritton; Glasbury (two); Gosbeck (two); Grantchester (two); Great Ilford (two); Halifax; Harlaxton; Haselbeech; Headbourne; Heapy; Heywood; Hinton Parva (two); Hinton St. George; Holbrook; Hopton; Horstead; Hurst Green; Ilketshall St. Margaret (two); Kemerton (two); Ken (two); Langley Burrell (two); Lawhitton (two); Lechlade; Littleton (two); Llanfihangel Helgen; Llanwyre (two); Lower Swell; Lytham; Manton (two); Marchington (two); Merriot (two); Millbrook; Millend; Milnsbridge (four); Monton; More (two); Myddfai (two); Nailsea; Newendon (two); New Malden; Newnham (two); Newton Flotman; Newton Linford; Norbury; Northampton (two); Norwich; Nunney (two); Odiham (two); Oswaldtwistle; Otterbourne; Ottringham; Overstone; Penton Mewsey; Pickering; Pitsford; Playford (two); Preston (two); Quarley; Reading; Redhill (two); Rendlesham; Ribchester; Roecliffe (two); Rotherfield Greys (two); Ryther with Ozebdike (two); St. Gabriel's Manchester (two); St. Judy (two); St. Simons, Salford (two); Satterthwaite; Scotby; Seer Green; Shiplake; Smallburgh; Stowlangtoft; Strumpshaw; Theale (two); Thornton Hough; Thruxton; Trimdon (two); Turweston; Upper Chelsea; Waddington; Wallsend; Wells; Wentworth; West Lydford; Westminster; Wickham; Wootton; Worsley (two); and York to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Ashton, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATAL (EXECUTION OF NATIVES).

Copy presented of Petition to the Privy Council of the twelve Natives recently executed in Natal, and the Affidavit in support of the Petition, and the Judgment [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Denmark, dated the 26th December, 1905, 23rd January, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Promotion of Sub-Postmasters to Head-Postmasterships.

MR. ELLIS-GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Postmaster-General how many established sub-postmasters (head office scale) have been promoted to head postmasterships since the class has been formed; and whether a greater proportion of these vacancies will be reserved for officers in this class in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Since the formation of the class of salaried sub-postmasters there have been six appointments from that class to the class of head postmasters. Appointments to head postmasterships are filled by the selection of the most suitable candidates; and I do not think it would be expedient to reserve any proportion of such appointments for any particular section of offices.

Sales of Irish Estates.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will furnish a list of all the estates sold to the end of March, 1906, to the Estate Commissioners by the Land Judge and otherwise, under The Irish Land Act, 1903; showing in respect of each estate the estimated gross amount of costs, charges, and expenses which would have been necessary or usual for the vendor to pay under the laws previous to that Act, and from the payment of which he has been relieved; the share of that amount which the Act of 1903 has rendered wholly unnecessary; the share which is now borne by the State, merged in the salaries and upkeep of the public service; the share, including publications, advertisements, etc., for which the State has made direct payments; and will he have this information included in all future Reports of the working of the Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they are having a Return prepared which will show, by counties, every estate sold under the Act of 1903, with the name of the vendor, purchaser, townland, area, valuation, rent, tenure, and purchase money This Return cannot, however, be ready for some months. It would not, in the Commissioners' opinion, be possible to give in a statistical form for each estate the other information asked for in the Question, but it may be stated generally that under the Act of 1903 the vendor has been relieved of the following charges, viz., the payment of stamp duty on vesting order or fiat at the rate of half per cent. on the purchase money; the expenses of publication of notices; the expenses of the preparation and service of notice on public departments and of searches in Registry of Deeds, Titles, and Judgments; and, in cases of sales to the Land Commission, of such negotiation fee as may be sanctioned under Section 23 (11). The Commissioners do not think that the information asked for could be given in their Report, or that, even were it possible to give it, there would be any result commensurate with the very large amount of time delaying their other work that would be occupied in its preparation.

Contract for Conveyance of Mails from Gweedore to Bunbeg.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Mr. James Gallagher, Meenala, Gortahork, county Donegal, tendered on November 23rd, 1895, for the conveyance of mails by car from Gweedore railway station to Bunbeg and back; that Mr. Gallagher was invited by the surveyor to modify his tender, and that he did so on December 14th last; that he was subsequently invited to name his sureties, which he did on December 18th; that on January 13th he was informed that his tender was not accepted, no reason being alleged; and will he say whether his tender, as modified, was the lowest tender offered, and upon what grounds the tender, as amended, was ultimately refused.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The facts are, I understand, substantially as stated. I have, however, called for a further Report on the subject, and on its receipt I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Telegraph Staff of the Post Office—Additional Increment for Technical Ability.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will give a Return of the numbers of the telegraph staff of the Post Office who have obtained the additional increment granted for certificates of technical ability since its institution in 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) During the last five years 945 additional increments for technical (telegraph) qualifications have been granted. The statistics relating to the years 1897–1900 are not immediately available; but if the hon. Member wishes further information I will obtain it.

Vacancy for an Established Postman at Cheltenham.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General is he aware that a vacancy for an established postman has existed at Cheltenham since July of last year; and whether he will take steps to have it filled by the appointment of the assistant postman who has performed the duty since the vacancy has arisen.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) A general revision of the staff at Cheltenham is in hand, and I regret that I am not in a position to fill the appointment at present.

Post Office—Suggested Abolition of the Irish Scale.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will abolish the 15s. to 18s. scale in Ireland, in favour of 16s. to 20s. as he has done in Great Britain.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I do not think that I should be justified in reconsidering this matter pending the Report of the Select Committee on Post Office Servants.

Free Medical Attendance for Bangor Postal Officials.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will take steps to secure free medical attendance at Bangor, county Down, in accordance with the promise of the postal authorities.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) A medical officer was appointed to the post office at Bangor, county Down, on the 15th of March last.

Ex-telegraph Messengers performing Postmen's Duty at Manchester.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster General whether he his aware that there are sixteen ex-telegraph messengers at Manchester, who have been performing postmen's duties, and are threatened with dismissal; and whether he will take steps to secure appointments as postmen for them.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have inquiry made on the subject and communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Inspetcor's Report in the "Schoolmistress."

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) To ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the communication of an inspector, on page 392 of the *Schoolmistress* for 8th March; whether he can state the school and the name of the inspector referred to under the heading of country mixed school; whether the inspector has received, or expects to receive remuneration for forwarding to that journal the report of his visit to that school; and whether the inspector will be admonished to refrain in the future from addressing to pupils questions intended to be offensive to Irish people.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have no reason to suppose that the report in question was forwarded by the inspector. The Board have no means of ascertaining the name of the inspector or of the school.

Repayment of Income Tax to Friendly Societies.

Mr. TILLETT (Norwich): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the possibility of introducing some easier and more expeditious method for assisting friendly societies in obtaining repayment of Income Tax deducted from interest payable on their mortgage securities.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) In accordance with a recommendation made by the Departmental Committee on Income Tax (see paragraph 125 of Report, Cd. 2575), arrangements have already been made by which the sums claimed by friendly societies, in respect of Income Tax deducted from interest paid on their mortgage securities, are repaid at once provisionally. Verification of the claims takes place subsequently and cannot be dispensed with. In the circumstances, it does not seem possible to do more than is already done in the way of facilitating or accelerating the payment of claims.

Irish Land Purchase.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners can yet give any information in regard to the application of Mr. D. Lehane, evicted tenant, Ballyclough, Mallow, for reinstatement in his former holding; and whether, in view of the fact that this holding is in the landlord's possession, and that he is inclined to sell to the tenant, the Commissioners will communicate with the landlord in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that Denis Lehane claims as the representative of his father, who was evicted seventeen years ago by the father of the present owner of the estate. The Commissioners have approached the present owner, who has informed them that the evicted holding now forms portion of his home farm, and that he does not wish to reinstate the present applicant, who is a carpenter.

Irrecoverable Rates in County Limerick—Form of Declaration.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what is the reason for the change in the form of declaration to be made by rate collectors in the county of Limerick regarding irrecoverable rates; and why it is that while formerly the rates not recoverable by rate collectors, in cases where the persons were receiving outdoor relief, were deemed irrecoverable and sanctioned by the Local Government Board as such, they are not now so considered by the Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The hon. Member has been misinformed. The Local Government Board have made no change in the form of declaration referred to. The declaration is to the effect that the collector has diligently endeavoured to collect each item of rate for which he claims a refund, the object of the declaration being to enable collectors to obtain recoupment of sums which though temporarily uncollectable are not in law irrecoverable, and to receive poundage fees thereon. Collectors who do not seek these concessions or claim refunds are under no obligation to make the declaration.

Sale of the Mount Shannon Estate, County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when the negotiations for the sale of the Mount Shannon Estate, in the county of Limerick, were first entered into by the Estates Commissioners; when was the purchase agreement signed by them; and what is the cause of delay, if any, in the completion of the sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the originating request in respect of the sale of the Mount Shannon Estate of Mrs. Hester Nevins was lodged with them on 19th October, 1904; but no proposal to purchase the estate has yet been made by the Commissioners. The delay in completing the purchase has been due to legal difficulties, arrangements with the owner as to the mansion house, and other matters, and when these have been settled the preparation of a scheme for the re-sale of the estate will be proceeded with.

Inspectors under the Irish Land Act.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether inspectors have been appointed in connection with the administration of the Land Act, 1903, to inquire into the cases of evicted tenants with a view to their reinstatement; if so, how many, and whether they have yet made inquires for that purpose and with what results; whether they have yet visited the county of Limerick; if not, when may they do so; and whether a Report of their inquiries will be published as a Parliamentary Paper.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that inquiries are being made into the cases of evicted tenants by the existing staff of inspectors so far as it is sufficient for the purpose. The Irish Government are in communication with the Treasury with reference to the appointment of additional assistant inspectors, and I hope that the matter may shortly be settled. Inquiries have been made into the cases of eight evicted tenants in county Limerick. The Commissioners propose to show in their annual Report the result of their inspector's inquiry.

Salaries of Irish Medical Officers.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst the ratepayers in Ireland regarding Section 6 of The Local Government (Ireland) Amendment Act, 1902, which places on the ratepayers the total amount of the increase of salaries given to the medical doctors, half of such increase being paid by the Government before that Act was passed; and whether he will introduce legislation repealing that section and reverting to the old system.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to the reply which I gave to the similar Question of the hon. Member for South

Cork, on the 12th March,† to which I have nothing to add.

Quarterly Payment of Army Pensioners.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it would be possible to pay Army pensioners weekly, in order to remove the present cause of thriftlessness through their being paid quarterly.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am giving this matter my most careful consideration, and as soon as a decision is arrived at I will inform the hon. Member.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Post Office Sites Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said he had already received some consideration from the House when first addressing it; but, needless to say, he should that day, occupying a more onerous position, naturally appreciate very much a further extension of the kindness he had experienced, and if it were accompanied by an equally ample support in the Lobby it would not be any the less acceptable. In asking the House to pass the Second Reading of this Amending Bill to the Diseases of Animals Act of 1896, perhaps it would be better if he recapitulated one or two details as to the methods in vogue prior to that Act. The Board of Agriculture prior to 1896 had discretionary power, and, under a rigid system of inspection, they were in the habit of excluding or admitting foreign animals, according to the circumstances of the case. That that method was considered adequate was testified by the fact that in 1894, although there had been cases of alleged disease detected in foreign animals, the Government did not consider it necessary to alter the regulations, in spite of the fact that Mr. Chaplin moved an Amendment to the effect that foreign animals should all be slaughtered at the port of landing. The Government resisted the Amendment. Therefore, although disease was at the time known to exist, yet it was not considered necessary by the then Government to alter the regulations or to amend the law. In urging this Amendment, Mr. Chaplin used words to which he (the speaker) wished the House to pay special regard, because they constituted a justification, if justification were required, for the present amending Bill. He said—

> "Whenever a country becomes free from disease, then the Act may be repealed in this particular."

They knew that from the passing of the Act of 1896 there had been an agitation up and down the country against it by those who considered they had suffered injury. That agitation had become more and more accentuated, and, as far as they could see, it was more likely to increase than to diminish. After the passing of the Act of 1896, appeal with regard to the reversal of restrictions was through Parliament, instead of the Board of Agriculture, and he considered that a clumsy method of procedure. It meant that before any real grievance could be remedied, they had to go through the precarious method of passing a Bill through the House of Commons, and sending it on to another place where, perchance, it might be reviewed in a spirit contrary to the spirit which prevailed in this House. His point was that the powers of the Board of Agriculture previously exercised were thoroughly effectual for their purpose. At the time the Act was passed, the whole of the Liberal Opposition resisted it, and the hon. Member for South Somerset, who represented the Board of Agriculture at the present time in this House was the only Liberal who supported the action of the then Conservative Government. Lord Burghclere, when Minister of Agriculture, in 1893, in reply to deputation, said—

> "He would not be justified in restoring the privilege of free entry in the case of Canadian cattle until he was in possession of the additional evidence which would be afforded by a

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 876.

systematic examination, extending over a reasonable and sufficient period, of the cattle landed here for slaughter. He trusted that the result of such an examination might be to confirm the view that the requirement of slaughter at the port could be waived with reasonable security against the importation of diseased animals, in which case, and in the absence of any unfavourable news from Canada, he considered that he would be bound under the statute to allow free entry to be resumed."

He also said that—

"The cattle breeders were afraid that some day Canada, the United States, Argentina, and other countries would be able to show a clean bill of health, and the prices would fall to a ruinous extent. What was desired was to give a monopoly in store cattle to the breeders in this country. No one could deny that this legislation was for one class and one trade and he felt it his duty to oppose it."

What had been the result of this legislation? It had secured entirely the home market for store cattle and for cattle for dairy purposes to breeders in this country; it had increased the importation of fat cattle which had to be slaughtered at the post of debarkation not then in the best condition to be slaughtered; it had lessened the supply of first-class home-fattened and home-killed beef, it had rendered consumers more dependent upon imported dead meat—frozen, tinned, and preserved—about the inspection of which we knew little or nothing; and it had denied to our industries the by-products which living animals always brought with them, viz., hides, hair, bones, etc. It was absolutely essential that we should have free and ample supplies of fresh meat for our industrial classes. They were the bones and sinews of our industries, and their stamina and physique were of the first importance. There had been deputations from consusumers, and, if anyone doubted that it was a consumers' question, he would like to ask their attention to the representative character of the deputations which presented their views before the responsible Departments and in other quarters. Agriculturists, local authorities, harbour and river trusts, cattle dealers, shipowners, co-operative societies, all were represented, and their numerical strength was an argument in favour of abolishing the restrictions. The benefits would not be confined to one class, but would be conferred upon many, in contradistinction to the one class which enjoyed the benefit of the present prohibition. The Co-operative Societies—what was their interest? Surely that of the consumer. The Co-operative Societies of England and Scotland, representing a population of about 9,000,000, were unanimously in opposition to the Act of 1896 and were in favour of the proposed Amendment. Was not that a fair indication that it was a consumers' question? What about the agriculturists? They had the courage to speak out, and were in advance of their colleagues. They said that they paid higher prices for store cattle and that that prevented them from supplying the markets at prices low enough to compete with the level produced by the importation of dead and inferior meat. The stores were the raw material of their great industry. Their importation stimulated the industry and benefited the consumer. He could refer to one engaged in the industry on a very large scale. He was a gentleman in Sussex, farming 2,000 acres, feeding 300 dairy cows, and who formerly used to fatten 300 cattle. He was also a breeder, and he (the speaker) was sure his statements would carry weight in the House. He said—

"The decrease in the annual growth of roots is a practical illustration of the effect it is producing on the arable farms. Very many thousands of acres of the cream of the land in this country have already ceased to return any profit to the occupiers, and not only is the land being gradually forced out of cultivation, but the labour otherwise required in connection with the fattening of cattle, and the growing of roots and corn, is also being displaced, and during all this time British farmers are being hopelessly beaten by their foreign competitors in the beef markets, and for that reason fatten only the least number of cattle possible."

That was by a practical man.

MR. FLETCHER (Hampstead): Might I ask the hon. Member who that farmer is?

*MR. CAIRNS said he was not sure that he had the gentleman's permission to give his name, but he would be glad to give it to the hon. Member privately, and he could assure the House that he was well known. The agriculturist with arable land had to buy in a restricted market and to sell in an unrestricted market.

They asked for the liberty to conduct their industry in their own way. They all agreed that agriculcurists in this country had had gratuitous advice given them galore in recent years, but when level-headed, far-seeing men who understood the question and saw where the shoe pinched and what the remedy was came and asked for that remedy, strong interests sought to push them back. The men who were most anxious to have Canadian store cattle were men who had full knowledge of them. They had had experience, and he was sure that fact ought to have weight with the House. He thought that in this matter they had an object lesson. They might put on a restrictive measure for a certain purpose and say they were not putting on a protective measure, but that would not prevent its being protective. He thought it was just as well to know that here they had a concrete illustration that intentions did not amount to much in this matter. He put this question to all those hon. Members interested in stock breeding. If there was no risk whatever of the importation of disease, would they be in favour of this Bill. [Cries of "Yes."] Then how did they account for the fact that hon. Gentlemen opposite who represented Ireland, although his Bill did not affect Ireland, were opposing it to a man although not an animal could at present be imported into Ireland from Great Britain, nor could any enter under this Bill?

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth): I ask the hon. Gentleman whether he does not think the importation of cattle from Canada will affect the price of Irish cattle.

*MR. CAIRNS said that was exactly the point. The late Mr. Hanbury, replying to a deputation at Edinburgh on the 19th October, 1901, said—

"There is one reason which I am bound to say weighs with me, and it is this—given the fact that although a country may be free from disease, what would happen if the importation of store cattle, say from two countries free from disease at the present moment—Canada and the United States—were to be allowed? The first thing that would happen undoubtedly would be that the price of English stores would naturally fall to the price of the stores sent from Canada and the United States."

Lord Burghclere said on November 28th, 1902, in a letter to *The Times.*

"The Act forbids for all time and from all parts of the world the introduction of store cattle into this kingdom. It is said of course that the consumer does not suffer, owing to the large import of dead meat from the Colonies and elsewhere; but it must be remembered that dead meat is practically the manufactured article and store cattle the raw material, and to admit one and unnecessarily exclude the other is purely to violate the elementary canons of free trade."

They would all admit that the Government must take every precaution against the introduction of disease into this country. In dealing with the question of disease he would ask the indulgence of the House while he gave a series of figures. It was necessary to go into rather more detail than he would desire in order to arrive at the present condition and the past history of this question. In 1890 the cases of diseases in our home herds were pleuro-pneumonia 2,649, and anthrax 288. The Canadian imports were 121,312 and there was no case of disease. In 1891, pleuro-pneumonia, 1,314; anthrax, 369; Canadian imports, 108,289; disease, none. In 1892, foot and mouth disease, 1,248; pleuro-pneumonia, 593; anthrax, 453; Canadian imports, 98,239; no disease whatever for nine months, and in September four cases. In 1893, foot and mouth disease, 30; pleuro-pneumonia, 30; anthrax, 877; Canadian imports, 82,925, in which there were four cases of disease. In 1894, foot and mouth disease, 7; pleuro-pneumonia, 15; anthrax, 632; Canadian imports, 82,323, diseases 6. In 1895, pleuro-pneumonia, 1; anthrax, 608; Canadian imports, 95,993; diseases, 2. From the 10th of July, 1895 to the 20th February, 1896, the date when the right hon. Member for South Dublin introduced his amending Bill, not one further case of disease had occurred amongst Canadian Cattle. Up to the 23rd of March, the date of the Second Reading of the Bill, no case occurred, and up to the 22nd of June on the Third Reading not a single case had been reported. The intention of the Act would appear to have been to exclude these imported cattle altogether. Since the beginning of 1896 up to February, 1906, ten years and two months, there were in our home herds 259 cases of foot and mouth disease, ten cases of pleuro-pneumonia; 7,714 cases of anthrax, and yet of the 1,216,709 Canadian cattle landed there was not a single case of disease of any kind, and that under the strictest system of inspection. It might be said there were other diseases than those scheduled. Let them take tuberculosis. Tuberculous carcases in this country were destroyed as unfit for human food. That was not under the Board of Agriculture, but the local authorities, and it was very difficult to get figures for the whole of the United Kingdom. He had, however, the Returns for the City of Glasgow, which might be taken as typical of the rest of the country. In the five years 1900–1905 of 252,805 carcases of home cattle inspected, there were 39,407 which were tuberculous, fifteen and a half per cent. of the whole. Of those, 5,616 were wholly destroyed, 4,268 partially destroyed, and 29,528 were passed. Of the 207,080 carcases of foreign cattle which were inspected, 1,751 were tuberculous, less than one per cent. of the whole, viz., ·85 per cent., and of those eleven were destroyed, sixty-nine were partially destroyed and 1,671 were passed. That was to say, that for every 101 home carcases destroyed as unfit for human food only one foreign carcase was destroyed. Did not that point clearly to the fact that the sooner we had these healthy animals amongst our herds the better. These Canadian animals were the healthiest in the world. It should not be forgotten that for years we had been exporting our best cattle, and that those we sent abroad had to pass the tuberculin test. The Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the City of London upon the meat supplies of 1904 stated—

> "The superabundance of second class and imperfectly prepared meat has been the most notable feature, and this in spite of poor prices obtained for it. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is a lessened demand for the home-grown product, and the reason for the deterioration, as before mentioned, is probably in great part due to the large export to foreign countries of our finest breed of cattle."

He thought that if they took the facts and figures he had given—and he did not use the figures as illustrations, but as absolute facts—the bogey of disease had been completely laid. The fears that disease would be brought over to this country by these cattle were legitimately held by many people here, but they did not know the facts. He felt sure that when the facts were known these people would come to the conclusion that it was not only safe but eminently desirable that we should as soon as possible import these Canadian store cattle. One word with regard to this question on the Canadian side. Since this embargo was imposed, and especially since the Act of 1896, the Canadian Government and people had never ceased to complain, and they still complained that we unfairly excluded their animals. If disease existed in their herds, the Canadian Government would never complain or consider that we should admit their animals. They had said so. But when they knew that they enjoyed immunity from disease, he thought they had a right to complain in the strongest terms. The Canadian Government spoke in the name of the Canadian farmers — intelligent men trained in their industry—whose grievance was that they could send store cattle to foreign countries but not to the mother country. We should do our utmost to develop trade with the colonies. At the Congress of the Chambers of Commerce at Ottawa, on the 20th August, 1903, the following Resolution was passed—

> "That the present restrictions on the importation of Canadian cattle into Great Britain are unjust, in so far as they are based on the dread of disease existing among such cattle, since any outbreak of disease is as rigidly guarded against in Canada as in the mother country, and no infectious disease exists in Canada; and that such restrictions are also undesirable, as they result in interference with the free development of trade, a decreased supply of cattle, and increased cost of meat to the British consumer: and that in the opinion of this Congress, the present regulations of His Majesty's Board of Agriculture, so far as they relate to the importation into the United Kingdom of Canadian live cattle under reasonable precautions, should be at once reconsidered."

Many people in this country were under the impression that it was by the action of the Board of Agriculture that this exclusion of Canadian store cattle was maintained, and they were unaware that there was an Act passed which permanently excluded the cattle. A gentleman who knew Northumbrian farming very well, and was now in Canada wrote—

> "Here in the West we have an abundant range for bringing cattle to a certain degree of perfection, but as yet we have little of the intensive cultivation necessary for 'finishing' cattle. At home you have a highly perfect condition of agriculture with a market at your doors, but an insufficient supply of store cattle."

The question, Why restrict this Bill to Canada ? was a perfectly legitimate one, and the answer was obvious. They only asked that the Bill should extend to a country where immunity from disease was proved. If any other hon. Member brought in a Bill to extend the same privilege to other countries similarly situated, and proved the facts as conclusively as he had done, he was sure it would receive the support of everyone who approved of the present Bill. He considered that we should advance our own interests by adopting legislation of this character, we should advance the interests of the consumer, and of the agricultural industry, and should be doing a tardy act of justice to our most important colony. By excluding Canadian cattle we had driven Canada to trade with the United States. When we complained that the trade from Canada to the United States was increasing we ought to remember that we contributed to it by forcing them to export their cattle to the United States. He asked the House to consider all these aspects of the question. He could not pretend to touch upon them all, but he would quote the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who summed up the position when writing to a conference of farmers at Perth in 1901. The right hon. Gentleman wrote—

> "The existing restrictions on the importation of cattle are, in my opinion, uncalled for upon sanitary grounds, vexatious to the trade, injurious to the farmer, especially in the east of Scotland, and contrary to the interests of the general consumer. I trust that we may look for their early removal."

Finally he would appeal in the words of Mr. Chaplin—

> "Whenever a country becomes free from disease, then the Act may be repealed in this particular."

He trusted the House would follow the course there indicated, and repeal the Act in that particular. He begged to move.

*MR. ROBERT PRICE (Norfolk, E.) thought the House would agree that they had had a most admirable and exhaustive statement on this subject from his hon. friend. The speech of his hon. friend had one effect besides his own eloquence and the authorities he brought forward, for it drew a very pertinent interruption from the hon. Member for Tamworth. He was delighted at the interruption because it tore away a veil from the real feelings of Gentlemen in this House and outside which were usually well concealed. When they discussed this question in this House the idea of protection, or the artificial raising of prices, was always put on one side by hon. Members who were in favour of the existing legislation, and it was truly refreshing to-day to hear honestly, frankly, and boldly, from an hon. Member on the Opposition side, the declaration that a change would affect the price of Irish cattle. As hon. Members knew, he spoke for a part of England which he supposed fattened more cattle, and he thought better, than any other district in England. He believed that in some districts they found the breeders against the feeders, but in East Norfolk, big and small farmers, and agricultural labourers, all took the same view on this question. The reason was that their principal industry, the one that really paid them with their arable land, was seriously damaged by this legislation. The right hon. Gentleman who was instrumental in passing the Act in 1896 frankly admitted that they would be probably under some disabilities, but the right hon. Gentleman made a prophecy which sounded very well, namely, that as a result of the legislation stores would be bred all over the country, and that there would be an ample supply from Great Britain and Ireland. He was sorry to say that that prophecy, like so many other prophecies, had not been fulfilled. On the contrary, they had suffered from the scarcity of stores and the high prices which naturally followed. He believed he was right in saying that the average price per head had been something like 30s. or £2 higher, and every hon. Member who understood agriculture would know that to people whose principal industry was feeding stock that was a terrible disaster. From Ireland and the West of England they got at first some very good stock, but towards the end of the season they begun to get some of the cast-offs, because where people both bred and fed they kept the best stores themselves, and sent to market those which they did not want. The existing Act had led to an increase in the number of cattle for milking, and therefore the tendency was to turn arable land to grass, thus displacing labour. Those cattle were good for milk, but not for feeding purposes. In France it was recognised that the fowls which were good for laying eggs were not so good for the table, and it was equally true that some cattle were good for milk, but not for feeding purposes. What had been the result upon the root industry? In his district roots had rotted on the farm because the farmers could not afford to buy enough store cattle to feed them off. There was no market for them, because the condition of other farmers was just the same as their own. What they wanted was cheaper stores or more money in their pockets. The little men in Norfolk had not the capital, and never had sufficient to buy their own stores, and the practice had been that the dealers had bought the store cattle from them and placed them on the farms under a profit-sharing arrangement. There was now so little in the business that the dealers would not go in for it to the same extent. The result was that the land was being turned into inferior pasture. It might be asked why they did not go in for the dairy business. His reply was that if they did they would lose between 2,000 and 3,000 agricultural labourers, who would displace labour in the towns and help to swell the ranks of the unemployed. It was said that this was a question of disease. He remembered that in the debate one hon. Member spoke of it as a form of insurance; but it was a delightful kind of insurance under which others paid the premiums and the insurers got the bonus. At any rate, this legislation hit them seriously. He would ask, was it right that they should be hit? He agreed that it was if it could be shown that there was a real national object to be served, and a real danger of disease. They had never suggested that for their own benefit, even to save them from ruin, they should run the risk of introducing disease into this country. He had received a document from the Central Chamber of Agriculture giving a list of diseases which they might expect to get from Canada. Even the Central Chamber of Agriculture admitted that Canada was extraordinarily immune from disease and that Canadian cattle were amongst the healthiest in the world. The sea voyage from Canada was a very great security. [Cries of "Oh, oh."] At any rate diseases would show themselves in the course of the sea voyage and at least foot-and-mouth disease would be almost sure to show itself. He did not think they had ever had that disease from Canada. He wished hon. Members to recollect that although they shut out Canadian cattle the sole risk from it was pleuro-pneumonia, which was the only disease of which there was any real risk. [Cries of "No, no."] He thought it would be agreed that the sea voyage at any rate gave time for the period of incubation, and that was distinctly a safeguard. He would point out to the House that they never thought of shutting out foreign forage or hair and wool that came from abroad. There was an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease when his right hon. friend opposite was at the head of the Board of Agriculture. Where was that disease imported from? Nobody knew absolutely, but the Board of Agriculture agreed with most of the people in the neighbourhood that it came over from the continent with some forage. If they were afraid of disease why not shut out all foreign forage? In the case of forage nobody could see whether on the sea journey it was diseased or not, but the animals showed it at once, and when they were landed the inspector saw it and took steps to see that it was not spread. He believed that even his right hon. friend opposite would admit that there was a considerable amount of scientific authority against the view taken by the Board of Agriculture. The subsequent course of events and the whole of the circumstances surrounding them, including the post mortem appearances, made him feel very strongly that these cases of pleuro-pneumonia were not contagious. The Chamber of

Commerce did not say anything about the condition of our own flocks and herds. There had been more foot-and-mouth disease in this country during the last few years than Canada had had during its whole career. In this country anthrax was always with us. There was another disease called hard tongue, and when such beasts were bought it was generally found that ten or twelve in every hundred cattle would not fatten. It was a very delightful thing to meet hon. Members opposite who on this matter did not think about money and making £2 a head extra, who thought more about this dreadful disease being spread amongst the breeding herds of England, and who were going to oppose this Bill although it did not make one penny difference to their constituencies, and although the disease did not affect Ireland in the least. With regard to the disadvantages: first of all, this legislation prevented English breeders from refreshing their breeds of cattle. When he was in the United States five years ago he was talking about cattle to a person who was originally an Oxfordshire man, who was engaged out there breeding Hereford cattle on a large scale, and who used to buy very largely over in this country. He informed him that during his last three or four visits he found that some of the best strains of cattle in this country were getting very thin. He showed him two or three fine beasts, told him their pedigree, and assured him that if they wanted to keep up their Herefords to the old standard they would have to come for some of their strains to America. When the Scotch deputation went over to Denmark some time ago to see the dairy industry, they were immensely struck with the milking power of the cows there, and they were very anxious to introduce into this country some beasts of Danish breed in order to see how they would do here. The present state of the law prevented that from being done. When they saw a nation succeeding in agriculture as Denmark was doing to-day, and when they had in the United Kingdom some of the finest pastures in the world he submitted that it was worth while trying to get animals like those to be found in Denmark.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Would this Bill help us to get them?

*Mr. ROBERT PRICE admitted that the Bill would not, but it was what might be called the thin end of the wedge. Perhaps his hon. friend would like to know why this Bill was in its present shape. It was because it dealt with that part of the subject which had the largest driving power behind it. That was a positive fact. The promoters of the Bill wanted to go along the line of least resistance, and this they believed was the line of least resistance. His hon. friend had pointed out that his logic applied to other countries as well as to Canada, so long as the conditions which obtained in Canada obtained in other countries. The junior Member for York, who took a great interest in this matter, would admit that our supremacy in breeding was in danger. There was no doubt that the supply of first-class beef was not such as it ought to be. He was not talking of ordinary beef, plenty of which was coming from America. They did fatten some of the very best in Norfolk, but just as "you cannot make a purse out of a sow's ear," so superior animals could not be made with inferior stores. They could not at present turn out beef of the quality which they used to produce, but they would be able to do it if they could get better stores. One of the cruelest things in Norfolk was that most of the land was not capable of being laid out in pasture. It took about nine years to turn it into pasture, and when that was done it was not good. One of the worst things from which the country was suffering at the present moment was the depopulation of the country districts, and legislation of the kind of which he was complaining tended to that result. The only advantage it gave was a possible security against disease, but he believed the risk of disease was very small. His hon. friend had challenged him as to mange. It was a disease which he did not know much about, but according to a report of the Central Chamber of Agriculture it was a disease which could be postponed for an almost indefinite time by dipping. [An Hon. Member: Two dips.] If the restrictions on the importation of cattle were removed he would be willing to put the feeding industry under liability to give the animals three, four, five, or even ten dips. He liked that sort of disease. He hoped if he ever caught a disease himself it would be of a kind which could be dealt with by two dips. He believed that mange did not prevent cattle from fattening, and did not affect the milk they produced. He sincerely hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading. Portions of this country had been under a disability which they had done nothing to deserve. He trusted that this House which was composed so largely of free traders would recognise that what was now being done in regard to the importation of cattle was not in accordance with their principles.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he had been asked by the farmers of this country to do all he could to prevent this Bill from being carried. If his hon. friend had seen the deputation that waited on Lord Carrington he would have seen that the farmers in almost every part of the country were represented except those of Norfolk. This was a matter between farmers, and it did not concern the rest of the public. As to what was said about labourers, it was quite evident that his hon. friend was not a farmer himself, for, if he were, he should not have told the House what he did. It was a question as between arable and grass land, and his hon. friend had admitted that the districts where labourers would be displaced could not be turned into grass. He believed that more labour would be required if farmers turned their attention to dairy farming rather than to the raising of fat stock. There were other products of a dairy farm besides butter. He had had some experience himself both in dairy farming and in the fattening of cattle. He could assure his hon. friend that even when producing butter there were many farmers who could make a fair profit. The existing law had worked well all through, and it had not had the effect on prices which had been asserted. [Cries of dissent.] He had the statistics and he would submit them for the information of the House. Although he approved of the present law in this matter, he claimed also to be absolutely a free trader. It had not been shown that a law passed for the purpose of safe-guarding the health of our herds was really "protection," but he did not say that there were not protectionists who regarded it as protection, or that there were not others against protection of any sort who said that the present restrictive legislation was contrary to their principles. It was very difficult to ascertain the prices of store cattle, but he had been supplied with some statistics recorded by the Teviotdale Farmers' Club and the Border Union Agricultural Society, showing the average prices each year from 1891 to 1905. The table prepared by the Teviotdale Farmers' Club showed that in 1891—the year before Canadian cattle were excluded—the average price of a two-year old of the shorthorn breed was £12 7s. 6d. while in 1905 it was £11 5s. The statistics recorded by the Border Union Agricultural Society showed the average prices of other breeds during the same period. In 1891 the price of a two-year-old was £13 as against £12 7s. 6d. in 1905. These were the prices for particular years, but if they took an average of a number of years the price had been a little less since the restriction was put on. It might be said that that was for one particular place. It might be said that one particular case did not prove the general rule. But he had the average price of store cattle.

*Mr. ROBERT PRICE asked if the hon. Gentleman argued that by limiting the supply of store cattle the price was reduced.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said that his contention was that, on account of the existing law, the home and Irish supplies of store cattle had been increased and the price had not been materially altered. He wished to emphasise the fact that farmers had a terror of the introduction of any infectious cattle disease. He should like to read one or two farmers' letters which he had received in order to give an idea of the strength of that feeling. One farmer wrote—

"In the early seventies, when as a young man I was struggling with the difficulties usually attending a first start in life, I was unfortunate in experiencing outbreaks of both foot and mouth disease and pleuro-pneumonia in my herd of forty cows. I remember with distinctness the terrible strain, the worry and anxiety of that time, and I pray that it may never be my lot to again go through such a time. I remember in the case of foot and mouth that the skin peeled off in large pieces from the mouth and tongue of the poor cattle, leaving them raw and sore and quite unable to eat, and they were so bad that it was miserable to see them about. I remember our difficulty in drenching them with gruel, which we had to do to keep them alive, and in the end, when recovered from the disease, their milk was gone and they themselves so emaciated as to be mere bags of bones. The attack of pleuro-pneumonia was more deadly in its results, nearly every affected beast dying. I cannot give you figures of my losses, but I know that it was only with the greatest difficulty that I did not succumb. In the present day the losses would be much more difficult to bear as the margin of profit per acre is so much less. Since that day labour, rates and taxes, and indeed well nigh every expense (except rent) has increased, and the value of the produces, milk and cheese, has decreased."

Because we had got rid at present of the disease that was no reason why we should incur any risk of its introduction again. Another farmer in the Market Harborough district wrote—

"In the year 1877 I was farming 400 acres at Risely, Bedfordshire. In November of that year I bought thirty Irish bullocks at Leicester fair at £16 per head. I bought other ten home breds reared by a neighbour. The forty were put into four yards divided from each other by rail fences, with a common drinking trough in the centre. Shortly after being put into the yard one of the Irish bullocks was taken ill, and the vet. was called in. He pronounced it to be a case of pleuro-pneumonia. Then another fell ill and still another, till by April, 1878, twenty-two had been buried, after which the magistrates, under great pressure, assented to the remaining eighteen being sent to the London market."

It would be seen from that letter that the cattle were at once sent to the London market when there was any doubt as to what was wrong with them. He could read many more letters, but he had quoted a sufficient number to show the feeling that existed among farmers in regard to this question. They were not asking for any protection as to their prices. What they were asking for was protection—immunity from disease. He had gone carefully into this question this last year; he had had many opportunities of meeting farmers at farmers' clubs all over the country. He had talked to hundreds of individual farmers in widely separated districts, and in every case he found that the fear of the re-introduction of disease was enormous. He really believed that if the farmers of England and Scotland were polled, nine out of ten would be against this Bill.

*MR. CAIRNS: No, no!

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said there was another curious point. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill cried, "No, no"; but why was it that he went to shipowners and such people for support for it?

MR. CAIRNS: Would the hon. Gentleman mention a single case in which I have applied to a shipowner for support?

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said it was notorious that this agitation had been got up in the great towns and not by the farmers. The only farmers' clubs in favour of this Bill, or a farmer here and there, were in Norfolk and in the East Coast and Lowlands of Scotland. Throughout the country the opinion of farmers was at least ten to one against any alteration of the present law. As to the amount which was saved in compensation to farmers who had suffered loss from the death or destruction of cattle by reason of these diseases, accurate figures were difficult to get. But in the four years just before Canadian cattle were excluded, the amount of compensation paid reached £151,491, exclusive of what was paid in Ireland. Of course, they knew now that Ireland was free from disease. But during the last four years the amount paid in compensation had only been £8. That affected the ratepayers in the country, although not the ratepayers in the great towns. Having put the farmers' case, he now came to the question of the danger of introducing disease into this country by cattle from abroad. He admitted that in Canada the authorities did al they could to keep disease among cattle out of the Dominion. They kept out cattle from other countries except under a two months quarantine. That was equal to the operation of the present law in this country, for if we had here a two months quarantine it would have the effect of keeping out all store cattle. But unfortunately there were in Canada a frontier of 1,000 miles which was only an imaginary line, and cattle could walk over that line without the supervision of any Customs authorities. This was notorious, for, when the price of corn went up in the United States the farmers in Canada drove their corn across the line without being stopped by the United States officials, and sold their corn in the United States at enhanced prices. [Ironical cries of "Shame."] Well, that was a bit of luck. Furthermore, it was well known that cattle disease was rampant in the United States, and that the precautions taken to prevent its spread were very slight indeed. The people who dreaded the introduction of cattle disease into this country were farmers who had bred and reared cattle all their lives. Of course it might be said that they did not know their own business, but a good many people told others that. However, experts all protested against any alteration of the present law. The only expert evidence which was absolutely independent of any feeling one way or another was that given by the experts in the Board of Agriculture, and that was against this Bill. He knew that some members of the Government were of one opinion in regard to this matter and some of another; therefore he did not expect the Government to give any assurance as to which way they were going to vote on this Bill as a Government. He would be satisfied if the Government left it an open question. As to the effect of the present law on the price of meat, from 1880 to 1892 the average price of meat of inferior quality was 3s. 5d. per stone, of second quality 4s. 8d. per stone, and of the best quality 5s. 3d. per stone. From 1892, when Canadian cattle were prohibited from coming in till this year, the average prices were 2s. 8d., 3s. 11d. and 4s. 7d. Was not this proof that the price of beef had not been affected by the tax? If they took the price of mutton in regard to which there had been no regulation, it had not fallen very much. In 1891, taking the average price per hundred as a base at 105·5 for a great many years, in 1891 it was 98·6 and in 1892, the year of prohibition, it was 94·4. The next year it fell to 91·5. It therefore appeared that in the actual year in which the prohibition came into force there was a distinct fall in the price of meat, and he thought that since that date the average price had not been increased by the alteration. He had the average prices of meat per stone from that year onwards up to 1905, and they had been very steady and had not increased in the least degree from the year in which the alteration was brought about; the price had actually fallen. A more important question still was the price of milk. If that were raised, great injury would be done to the children, and the country would deteriorate, as its inhabitants would become weaker. If the supply of milk were decreased, the population of the country would have to resort more and more to condensed milk and foreign food stuffs, which were really deleterious to the health of children. There were a large number of cattle diseases in Canada which did not prevail here. It was quite true that they were not scheduled, but they were many of them new, and the Board of Agriculture in this country knew nothing about them. The moment, however, that our ports were opened to Canadian cattle that Department would have to know something about them and would have to schedule them and deal with the difficulty of coping with them. He would not talk of the long names which some of them had, and they were so novel that some of them had not names which the farmer could use, as they were only scientific. To take a disease the name of which was familiar, there were two kinds of mange in Canada, the dry and the wet mange.

MR. CAIRNS said the Board of Agriculture in Canada knew nothing about wet mange.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that he had in his possession a letter from the secretary of a cattle company in Canada in which the evils of wet mange were dealt with. There were, besides, a lot of other diseases in Canada which we did not have here.

MR. CAIRNS pointed out, as a matter of order, that he had stated upon the authority of the Board of Agriculture in Canada that they did not know and had never heard of wet mange. They had not got the disease there.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is a matter of argument, not of order.

MR. CAIRNS said it was a question of fact.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER remarked that if the hon. Gentleman said that he had had a communication from the Government of Canada to the effect that they had not wet mange in that country, that was one thing, but it was quite a different thing to their saying that they did not know of it. He had not seen the Canadian cattle himself, but he simply said that they were subject to these illnesses. But besides the different varieties of mange there were various other diseases from which Canadian cattle suffered, and which, if they were imported, would be most deleterious to the cattle of this country. Nobody could call this a free trade Bill because it gave a preference to one country over all others—that was to say, it conferred a preference upon Canada against all the other countries in the world. It was most absurd to describe a Bill containing such a proposal as a Free Trade Bill. The promoters of the Bill apparently did not think there was enough driving power to carry a free trade measure, as they knew perfectly well that if the proposal was to let in cattle from all foreign countries the feeling would be very strong against such a proposal, and that they would not have a chance of getting the measure through. Therefore they brought forward a Bill with a view to benefiting one country, and after they had passed it he supposed they would deal with other countries one by one. If there was any question of free trade in the matter he should not be there to oppose the Bill. He had worked for free trade all his life and would vote against any restriction of it. But in this case the fear and the danger of disease would do a great injury to our trade, and over and over again the most avowed free traders had put into practice protectionist measures against that danger and in doing so had in no way violated the principles of free trade. If it was found that the hides and hair brought in disease as had been argued, then their importation could be prohibited. The importance of free trade was so great that he would make considerable sacrifices for it, but this was not a free trade Bill. In the interests of cheap food, in the interests of the poor children of the country whose milk supply would be affected, in the interests of the farmer and of the agricultural labourer, he asked the House not to pass the Bill. On behalf of all these interests he asked hon. Members to vote against this Bill and not to be led away by the false echoes of a great Party cry into doing an injury to the country and especially to the agricultural classes. He begged to move.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said the hon. Member for Newcastle, in the speech he made upon the introduction of this Bill, reminded one of the Englishman who said—

> "It is a fine day; let us go out and kill something."

The hon. Member had chosen as the field of his activity the most important industry of the country, the agricultural industry. The agricultural interest had the least representation and the fewest speaking Members in this House. That could be seen if hon. Members looked at the names on the back of this Bill. Many interests in this country, with the exception of the agricultural, were represented by those whose names were on the back of the Bill. There were shipowners, ship-brokers, merchants, barristers, a town clerk, a doctor, an engineer, a cake manufacturer, and every kind of interest save that of agriculture. He noticed from a Report recently issued dealing with infant mortality, that one half of the infants born in Newcastle died before they were a year old. They died because they had not sufficient fresh milk or from some other cause, and he thought the hon. Member would have been far better employed in investigating the causes of that infant mortality in his own constituency than in introducing this Bill. He (Mr. Wason) had the honour to be associated in his opposition to this Bill with hon. Members opposite representing Ireland, by being specially alluded to in the whips sent out by the interests supporting this Bill. The House wished to know why they opposed this Bill when Ireland was specially excluded and when it was supposed that the Irish Members were taking no interest in it. He was opposing the Bill on the ground of great Imperial and national interests. It was not because Orkney and Shetland were cut out of this Bill that he opposed it, but because they had suffered, as Ireland had suffered, from cruel landlords and evictions, and they hated and detested the great cattle ranches in whose interests wholly and solely this Bill was framed. He himself was born in South Ayrshire, and since he had come home from the Colonies he had lived among the small farmers in that county. He had received a petition from them which represented the whole of the farmers of South Ayrshire praying that this Bill might not be passed into law. They pointed to the great cattle plague of 1866 when many of the farmers were ruined. It did not interfere with the landlords any more than that they suffered some little inconvenience from it, while those who held the farms were ruined and went to the workhouse. The debates upon this question showed that there was no idea whatever of protection in the minds of the Government who proposed carrying the Diseases of Animals Act 1896. The fundamental idea of that Government, who wisely carried that amending Act, was to take it out of the power of any weak and squeezable Ministers to put aside these regulations in the interests of a particular class. They all knew from the experience of the last few years the pressure which could be put upon Ministers. When a number of Members could go to a Ministry and say " You must do this or out you go " a state of things was brought about which constituted a very great national danger. It was for that reason that this Bill was introduced and it was for that reason that the farmers were bitterly opposing it. Why had they this motley crew of philsophical philanthropists on the one side, shipping industries, harbour boards, trusts, every industry in the world, except agriculture? Was it not a little curious that there was not one farmer who supported this Bill? He knew no farmer who supported it, and they had all these motley interests supporting it, including the Tariff Reformers. He did not wonder that the Tariff Reformers supported it, because the crux of this Bill was tariff reform, and preferential trade with the Colonies, a policy which had been most emphatically condemned at the last election. Here were the farmers with practically no representation in this House. Was it to be wondered at that they took a keen interest in this matter? Hon. Members on both sides of the House who represented the varied interests which supported this Bill were only fighting for their dinner. The farmers were fighting for their lives, their very existence. [Laughter.] Hon. Members might laugh, but what he said was true, as every agriculturist in the country knew. The speech of the hon. Member for East Norfolk was a curious admixture of cajolery and threats. He threw his fly over hon. Members sitting below the gangway, representing organised labour, and threatened them that unless they supported this Bill he would send all the stalwart lads from Norfolk to flood their labour market. Norfolk labourers would do very well in Norfolk if they had some of the land which was going to waste for want of Canadian cattle. They opposed this Bill because it attacked the cattle of this country. The cow was the poor man's friend. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham rose to the greatest pinnacle of renown upon the policy of " three acres and a cow." That is one of the policies upon which the Prime Minister had come into power—to make the country a treasure ground for the nation instead of a pleasure ground for the rich. One hon. Member had spoken about protection, and had said that this was a protectionist measure. Let them take it so. If it were then they were in very good company. Where was the hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division? [AN HON. MEMBER: Having his dinner.] He wished he had been having a drink. The hon. Member for Cockermouth was the strongest free trader in the House, but what would he say if anyone suggested that there should be free trade in drink? He and the whole Temperance Party would be up in arms against it in a moment. The hon. Members who represented the interests of organised labour did not carry out the true principles of free trade, and there were others who were bitterly opposed to Chinese labour, which could also be defended on the principles of free trade. Therefore, if they were wrong they were in good company. They felt very strongly on this question with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in one of the debates upon this very question had summed up their position when he said free trade in humanity was no part of the policy of the Liberal Party of this country. Nor was free trade in diseases. The hon. Member for East Norfolk had certainly made out some sort of case for fresh blood. But if he wanted to bring in fresh blood from Norway or from Canada or from anywhere else, for the benefit and the improvement of the Norfolk herds, why did not he say, "Do away with this Bill altogether and we will give you all the restrictions you desire to put upon us." Our Australian Colonies imposed a very heavy quarantine. Canada, America, France, Germany, the Argentine, all protected their country from disease by quarantine. This country alone was to open its ports to disease of all sorts on the bare word of another country. If a similar course were taken in this country he did not know but what we should be as well off as we were now and at the same time if anyone wanted to improve their flocks and herds they would be able to do so. That might possibly be to the ultimate advantage of the country. At all events it would do away with the ridiculous cry of "free trade *versus* protection." The expenses of the quarantine would all fall upon the importer who wanted the cattle, and everyone would be satisfied. Hon. Members could not for a moment prove that the restrictions under the present law had increased the price of meat. They knew perfectly well that since these restrictions had been placed upon cattle coming into this country there had been a large increase in the number of cattle bred in this country; that freights had gone down; and that the price of food had gone down. Of course it might be said that the price might have gone down further still, but more likely it would have gone up. In his opinion it was hon. Members representing urban constituencies who had a better right to complain, because although sweet, sound, and wholesome beef and mutton was bought wholesale at fourpence or fivepence a pound the retail price had not gone down. Much of the beef eaten in the country and possibly in the dining rooms of this House was purchased for about fourpence or fivepence wholesale, but when people wanted to buy it retail they had to pay a shilling and over a shilling a pound for it. They knew that cattle had increased in this country, and that the price of meat had gone down to a very considerable extent; that they got dead meat from the Argentine and the United States, and that that meat was infinitely more wholesome than meat procured from raw-boned animals coming into this country, and fed up with all sorts of oil cake and things for six months, and then was sold as "beef." There was one other matter which he would rather have left untouched in this debate, but as a Colonial he was bound to dwell upon it for a few moments. It was the despatch sent to this country last September by the Governor-General of Canada. Prior to that despatch they had a message from the Minister of Agriculture in Canada, Mr. Fisher, who told the Government that the imposition of these restrictions was an unfriendly act. We had never in all our history had such an insulting communication from any of our Colonies. If it had come from France or from any other Continental Power stocks would have gone down, our fleets and our troops would have been mobilised, and war might have ensued. Luckily for this country the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not Colonial Secretary when that message was received, otherwise there might have been some pretty recrimination. A milder Gentleman (Mr. Lyttelton) was then Colonial Secretary, and he received the message with due humility, but the idea of saying that our domestic legislation in this country was an unfriendly act was an insulting thing. Canada had imposed import duties against this country, and we had never made the slightest remonstrance. Yet when we passed a measure to protect our flocks and herds we were told by the Canadian Minister for Agriculture that it was an unfriendly act. The Resolution of the Dominion Parliament was couched in unveracious and insulting language.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) rose to a point of order. Was the hon. Member entitled to speak of a communication from a Colonial Government to the Government of this country as unveracious?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I think it very undesirable that that epithet should be applied. It is liable to misconstruction. Perhaps the hon. Member would substitute some more moderate expression.

*Mr. CATHCART WASON said he would at once withdraw at Mr. Speaker's request the phrase objected to, and would substitute for it the phrase, "a despatch liable to misconstruction." It was said that the Canadian herds were now and had been for some time past free from the particular diseases against which this embargo had been imposed. That was the statement of which he complained, because, as everybody knew, the Board of Agriculture could by regulation apply the embargo to diseases which were now prevalent in Canada. Canada was not free from any particular disease by reason of which this embargo had been imposed. The Act was passed ten years ago, and this country was now told that that Act cast an unjust imputation on Canada. They knew from the Board of Agriculture in Canada itself that the Canadian herds were not free from tuberculosis, mange, and other diseases, which we did not want here. He wished to impress upon Irish Members particularly that, outside cattle breeding, the great industry of Ireland was horse breeding, and in this very Report of the Canadian Board of Agriculture last year there was a detailed account of a disease which modesty almost forbade of his mentioning, namely a venereal disease among the horses of that country, which if it were imported into Ireland would be a most serious matter. The Canadian Board of Agriculture did not know where this disease came from, but they knew it was there. For this reason also they objected to this Bill, and there was another reason, and that was his final reason for objecting to it. When the late election was pending, when they were all, so to speak, fighting for their lives in the constituencies, they were assailed with all sorts of cries. They were called pro-Boers, Home-Rulers and everything else. At that time the Government was accused, he believed wrongfully accused, of pledging themselves, to remove all restrictions on all cattle coming over to this country. Those statements were circulated far and wide, and a deputation waited upon Lord Carrington actually while the elections were in progress of being held. Lord Carrington made a speech on the subject in reply to that deputation, in the course of which he said the matter was one of the very gravest concerns to the country, and that he was bound to state that the vast mass of opinion was against the introduction of these cattle. He gave the electors of the country very clearly to understand that he was going to be no party to the removal of these restrictions. On that ground they opposed this Bill. But that was the position, that this distinct statement was made while the elections were actually pending, and while hon. Members were going through the country. Those who represented agricultural districts would feel very strongly upon this matter, and their constituents would feel much gratified if after what had happened on that occasion the Government would take a strong and direct line upon it. He appealed to those Members of the House who had some conscience. Conscience was a peculiar thing, and had been well defined as being an inward feeling usually dormant only raised by indigestion and the fear of death. The hon. Member for Newcastle he was sure would have indigestion if he had his way, but in this House they were not in fear of death. It was a new House in the vigour of its prime, and he hoped they would reject this Bill. He had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of his hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. CAIRNS said he did not interrupt the hon. Gentleman while he was speaking, but he wanted to ask him on what authority he stated——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has addressed the House once.

*MR. CAIRNS: Not on this subject.

*MR. SPEAKER: All that is permitted to the hon. Gentleman is to make a personal explanation.

*MR. CAIRNS said he wanted to explain that the remark the hon. Gentleman had made with regard to the infant mortality in Newcastle-on-Tyne was absolutely untrue.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): On a point of order, asked whether an hon. Gentleman was entitled to say of another hon. Member that he had made a statement which was absolutely untrue.

*MR. SPEAKER: The words "absolutely untrue" are certainly never used in Parliamentary language.

*MR. CAIRNS: I beg your pardon, Sir; may I say the statement was incorrect?

MR. CATHCART WASON said he did not make a statement, but only said that he saw a report of this mortality.

*MR. H. GREENWOOD (York) said he had to congratulate himself that he was able to make his maiden speech in this House in support of a measure which he honestly believed would cheapen an essential article of diet in this country, and would remove a long-standing injury and insult to 6,000,000 of our loyal kinsmen. Speaking as a Canadian he regretted the criticism of a despatch sent by the Privy Council of the Dominion of Canada to the Colonial Office of this country—a despatch which was not framed in the spirit the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland had suggested. When the hon. Member urged the House to vote against this Bill in order to keep out Canadian horses, he wished to remind the hon. Gentleman that this Bill had nothing whatever to do with Canadian horses, upon which there was no embargo. He believed the whole of the argument in respect of disease was originally based upon a diagnosis of the lungs of one poor Canadian cow, that was alleged to have died of pleuro-pneumonia at Glasgow in 1892. He did not intend to go into the question advanced by various experts, but he would say, with the authority of the Dominion Government expressed in memoranda sent from year to year during the past ten years, that neither prior to 1892 nor subsequently had there been a single case of pleuro-pneumonia or foot and mouth disease in the Dominion of Canada, and it was utterly impossible for pleuro-pneumonia to originate, incubate, and remain restricted to one beast among the hundreds of thousands of cattle that roamed the hundreds of thousands of acres in Canada. Since 1892 over 2,000,000 head of cattle had been shipped abroad from Canada to this and other countries. They had been examined by veterinaries before being slaughtered, and their carcases were examined after slaughter, and in not one case had there been symptoms of any of the diseases in question. No other country in the world had the spotless record for its herds that the Dominion of Canada had. More than that, there had been from Lord Onslow, the late Mr. Hanbury, and Mr. Ailwyn-Fellowes, distinct pronouncements during the last few years that no disease was existent in Canada; and he felt bound to make a vigorous protest against the way terms were used in reference to diseases, implying that these diseases existed in Canada, although a direct accusation was not made. He would remind the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland that Texas was not a part of the British Empire nor a part of the Dominion of Canada.

MR. CATHCART WASON: But it is for the purpose of this Bill.

*MR. H. GREENWOOD said this Bill was restricted to the importation of cattle from the Dominion of Canada, of which Texas was not a part. The northern portion of Texas was about 1,000 miles south of Canada. He protested against the suggestion that cattle disease of all kinds existed in the Dominion of Canada, in face of the statements made by successive Ministers of Agriculture that no disease existed. The suggestion had been made by the hon. Member for Lichfield that mange existed. He admitted that a kind of mange did exist in Canada, but it was of a kind that was not only innocuous so far as the beef was concerned, but, more than that, no mangey beast had ever been landed in this country from Canada. The Board of Agriculture in this country, which was certainly never backward in framing measures for the restriction of Canadian cattle, had no restriction, so far as he knew, against mange at all. Let him give the career of one of these much discussed Canadian bullocks from birth to beef. He would remind the House in the first place that they were bred from selected breeding stock in this country. From only those which could pass the severe tubercular test could be bred the Canadian herd. In this country tubercular cattle were bred and were increasing every year, but in Canada, where the ancestry was carefully selected, the beast was reared almost entirely, if not entirely, in the open, and was free from tuberculosis. When in condition to be shipped to this country, which was one market for these beasts, it was carefully inspected by a veterinary officer of the Dominion Government before being put on the train. It was taken to the dock, and was there again inspected by a Dominion officer in company with a shipping or insurance officer; and he, from personal observation could vouch for the care and adequacy of the inspection. When the ship arrived off the coast of England the Board of Agriculture of this country had a further inspection. After being slaughtered, the carcase was yet again inspected; and was it possible for any diseased beast, assuming there were diseased beasts in Canada, to get through this inquisitorial sieve? He would that hon. and free-trade Members who were voting against this amending Bill were put through as severe a test. Underlying the objections to this Bill was implied the argument that the Canadian Government and people were desirous of dumping into this country diseased animals. [Cries of "No"]. He maintained that that was the presumption underlying the whole argument against the Bill. Lord Strathcona had even offered to pay the cost of a Commission to inquire into the whole question, but that challenge had never been taken up by the Board of Agriculture or any private section of farmers in this country. The whole honour and credit of the Dominion people was at stake in this question. They were not desirous that their beef, butter, or any other commodity should be stigmatised by the accusation of disease, and the paramount reason why the Canadians wished to have this embargo removed was that the intolerable stigma of this accusation of disease might be swept off the Statute Book of this country and the quality of the Canadian herds properly recognised. It had been said this afternoon that whilst there might not be disease in Canada, there was disease in the United States, and a frontier line of a thousand miles was no protection against the incoming disease from the American beasts. In the first place he would remind the House that there had been no cattle disease for the last four years south of that American line, and he had it from the Minister of Agriculture himself that there was not the slightest danger of American cattle being smuggled across the border. Moreover, every beast in the United States had to be branded with the brand of its owner, so that its place of origin could be at once detected. Again, the Canadian Government had, in their memorandum to the British Consul, offered to provide any system of quarantine against American cattle, and to make even more rigorous the present rigorous inspection of their own herds. The Government of Canada in this matter had again and again done its best to meet the wishes of the mother-land, and he regretted that up to the present these requests had been met with scant courtesy, and with no arguments whatever. One of the most regrettable things about the debate was the fact that the Irish Party was against this Bill. He had heard the hon. and learned Member for Waterford say that his Party was always loyal to the interests of democracy. What democracy was the Party loyal to in this case ?

MR. T. M. HEALY: We pay taxes, and you do not in Canada.

MR. H. GREENWOOD said he would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman that Canada did not cost this country a shilling. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: NOT Ireland.] The profits made by Irishmen out of the men who bought the Irish store cattle were artificially high. He contended that in this particular issue the Irish Party for the first time, so far as he knew, was opposed to one, and indeed the greatest, of the self-governing Colonies. It was unanimously requested by the Dominion of Canada that this embargo should be removed. In that they were opposed by the Irish Party, and by some of those Imperialists who believed in closer commercial union with Canada when it could be got at the expense of some other industry than the breeding industry. It was also opposed by some free traders—alleged free traders —who retorted by saying that this was a preferential Bill. He accepted the retort, but the preference understood by those hon. Gentlemen prior to the general election was a preference to raise the price of imported wheat. This was a preference to decrease the price of imported meat.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER: We deny it.

MR. H. GREENWOOD said that recent election experience prompted him to answer these unruly hecklers were it not that he was more afraid of offending his friends than his enemies. He was glad that this Bill had the support of the Labour Party to a man. The Labour Party represented the democracy in this country in a measure that no other Party could honestly claim. He regretted that he could not carry with him in this matter those men who called themselves Imperialists, but who on the first opportunity they had of doing an Imperial and just act to a great colony intended to vote against it. Let him advance an argument on the constitutional side of the question. The Dominion people and Government had again and again protested against this embargo. He was certain Parliament could not always resist this insistent, and, he thought, just protest from a great self-governing colony like Canada. The Canadian Government had couched its protest and its wish in most respectful and courteous terms. It was intolerable that the home country should by statute as at present attach to Canada the stigma of disease when disease did not exist. This Bill simply gave back to the Board of Agriculture that discretionary power which it had prior to the Statute of 1896. Let the Board of Agriculture use its own judgment whether or not these cattle should be admitted. It ill became this Imperial House to refuse this opportunity of granting a tardy measure of justice to 6,000,000 loyal kinsmen who did not cost this country a penny; and in granting that tardy act of justice to the Canadians they would be carrying out the principles of free trade, without the advocacy of which many of those who opposed the Second Reading of this Bill would not now be ornamenting the Benches of this House.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) said he was not at all disposed to quarrel with the position taken by the supporters of this Bill. It was quite right that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down should have spoken, as he so eloquently did, for his own country. It was only natural that hon. Members representing certain parts of England should try to cut down the price of store cattle in their own districts. But he thought the hon. Member who proposed and the hon. Member who seconded the rejection of this Bill had shown clearly that this special class was a very small matter in comparison with the general agricultural interest not only of Ireland, but of England and Scotland; and that in point of fact the passage of this Bill, and what it would lead to, would go very far indeed to put an end practically to profitable agriculture in the kingdom. He did not know how far Englishmen or

Scotsmen might be prepared to go in relying upon trans-Atlantic cattle, but if he were an Englishman or a Scotsman he should regard agriculture as a valuable industry and the foundation of a country's prosperity. Englishmen and Scotsmen were the best judges upon that subject; but this he knew, that so far as Ireland was concerned the passage of this Bill and what it would lead to would render at the very lowest 200,000 holdings in Ireland absolutely unprofitable and unproductive. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had professed amazement that the representatives of Ireland were opposed to this Bill. Why, in fighting this Bill they were fighting for their lives. There were in Ireland 490,000 holdings, the mean value of which was £12, and 215,000 of those holdings did not exceed fifteen acres in extent. To that enormous mass of poor people the immunity of their cattle from disease was so vital, their experience from former cattle diseases had been so terrible, the prices of their yearling cows and two-year-olds was so indispensable an element of their budget, and the present prices so low, that if there were any new outbreak of disease such as visited Ireland fifteen years ago, and if the Irish, Scottish, and English markets were to be glutted with a tremendous rush of Canadian or Argentine cattle, there would be no means of making the land pay. As to any immediate recurrence to tillage in Ireland that would be something too crude and farcical to talk of to practical men. Beyond raising a crop of potatoes he did not know anything that an Irish farmer under present conditions could do in the way of tillage to keep himself and his family alive, not to talk of paying rent and taxes. The hon. Member for East Norfolk who seconded the Bill suggested that they were making a claim for protection for Ireland. They were not doing anything of the kind. On the contrary, so far as there was any question of protection in reference to Ireland, the existing system clearly acted as a protective tariff as against the Irish farmers. Owing to cheap ocean freights and to their unlucky high rates in Ireland, cattle could be landed in English ports from Canada or the Argentine, upon cheaper terms than beasts could be put on the English market from West Cork. It would be very absurd for them to object to fair competition, and they did not object to it; on the contrary, the most thoughtful men in Ireland were engaged at present in bracing up the country to meet that competition by every improved form of agriculture, by industry, and by hard work; but he ventured to submit that there was such a thing as unfair and destructive competition, and that that was what the enormous mass of small farmers in Ireland would have to face in case this Bill should lead to the destruction of the Irish cattle trade, and should open the door once more to a terrific invasion of cattle plague such as occurred in the year 1882, when foot and mouth disease brought down the exportation of Irish cattle from 780,000 to 240,000 in a single year. The hon. Member for Newcastle who proposed the Second Reading of the Bill had spoken eloquently of the desirability of consulting the needs of our young colonies; but was there no Imperial interest in making it humanly possible for the Irish people to live and to fulfil their engagements? It was nothing in the way of a plea *in forma pauperis*, but a plea for bare justice that they were making, because this was unfortunately one illustration of what it cost Ireland, a poor country living by agriculture, to be governed and absorbed by a rich country. It was tending more and more to abolish agriculture altogether. Those who would shut their eyes, through any dogmatism about free trade and protection, to the extremely peculiar conditions under which Ireland was struggling, and who would content themselves with passing not merely what would be a protective Bill in favour of Canada but in favour of a flourishing young colony of which they were all proud, and which they all wished every sort of good luck, but which was already abundantly provided for—all he could say was that if men shut their eyes to the difficulties of Ireland in a matter of this kind, they would be furnishing a very dangerous argument to those who perhaps had already arguments enough as to the fatal results of the present union. The seconder had actually declared that the Bill did not refer to Ireland, and that Canadian cattle were only to be landed in British ports. He was sure the hon. Gentlemen who framed the Bill intended kindly by Ireland in nominally excluding her from its operations, and he entirely acquitted them of any desire to play a very poor practical joke at her expense; but did hon. Gentlemen really expect them to treat seriously the argument that the nominal exemption of Ireland made it a matter of entire indifference to Ireland? The magnanimous arrangement as to Ireland was simply this: Canadian cattle were not to be landed at the nearest port, where nobody wanted them except a handful of graziers, but they were to be quite free to inundate the English and Scottish markets, which were also the markets for the Irish cattle; and thus having destroyed the markets for the Irish cattle trade, he would like to know what there was in the Bill which would prevent a change in the present regulations as to importation between England and Ireland. They were told it would all be within the discretion of the Minister of Agriculture whether they were to be landed at all, but it was just that discretion to which they very strongly objected; they objected to entrusting to any individual a discretion which might cause them a new cattle plague and the loss of £68,000,000 worth of Irish property, and that the chief property and wealth of Ireland. They might be inclined to trust a good deal to the present Minister of Agriculture. They knew him, but they did not know who the Minister might be in the future, and they could not afford to run such a terrible risk. There was no question of a permanent exclusion of Canadian cattle. There was nothing whatever, if the circumstances were to change, to prevent the House from repealing the restrictions; but he submitted that it ought not to be done in a hypothetical case. It ought to be done with the full weight, advice, and responsibility of His Majesty's Government. It ought not to be done at the instance of private Members in the interest of a special class, no matter how legitimate it was from their point of view. The two Acts of 1894–6 formed a sort of fortress that was an essential barrier against a great national danger, and he ventured to submit that if that fortress was to be abolished, it ought to be with the full responsibility of the Government and of the House of Commons, and not by allowing this Grecian horse to be introduced within the walls. The hon. Member for York had made a powerful appeal to the Labour Party. Nobody sympathised more cordially than he, and he thought every Member for Ireland, with the desire for cheap meat that had induced some of the Labour Party to throw their powerful interest in favour of the Bill. The workers of Great Britain had no more cordial allies than they in working for everything that could help to improve their comfort, and to secure to them a full share of the good things of this world; but he submitted that very naturally they did not know and understand the results of the cattle trade and that they were not aware that the best judges and most skilled agriculturists he had ever heard discussing the question were of opinion that prices had reached as low a figure as would pay. It was the big grazier and the butcher who would have the benefit of any temporary reduction of prices, and leaseholders, he thought, would very soon find that if any diminution in prices occurred for the moment they would, if once the supply for the Irish field were closed to a great extent, very soon return to their former price. Like the Labour Party, it was not for the rich, but for the poor, that they were pleading. They were pleading for at least 100,000 extremely small holders in Ireland who were not farmers but mainly holders who had only one cow upon which they depended for their living. Anyone who knew Ireland and what it meant to these poor families when a cow was sick could imagine how terrible it would be if another plague were to sweep through their houses. They were obliged to kill their calves or sell them for a few shillings for veal. There was no earthly reason for not being perfectly candid with regard to the position of Ireland in the matter. Already the mere danger of the passage of the Bill had brought the cattle trade to a standstill. No event had occurred in Ireland since the great famine of 1846–7 which had been the means of bringing so terrible a disaster in Ireland as would follow the passage of this Bill and the other Bills to which it would lead. Hon. Members were not in a position to realise fully what those consequences would be. Every judicial rent fixed since 1894 was based upon this legislative security against the importation of foreign cattle. In every one of these cases—and they were well over 100,000—the farme s had been rented upon the supposition that Parliament would not repudiate the engagement entered into against the admission of foreign cattle. There was no disguising the fact that if once the basis upon which these rents were adjusted was altered the whole of those judicial rents would be thrown into the melting pot. Then they would have to deal with another 100,000 new peasant proprietors in Ireland. He would remind the House that something like £40,000,000 worth of property in Ireland had passed into the hands of new proprietors inevitably upon the calculation and supposition that at all events there would be no sudden dislocation or destruction of the very foundation on which agriculture had rested in Ireland for many years. He refrained from attempting to picture the state of things with which they would be face to face if these 100,000 peasant proprietors were to find themselves exposed to some new and terribly devastating plague. He did not wish to raise any unnecessary alarm in this House, but, as the hon. Member for Cambridge said the other night, things were going on in Ireland which were laying the foundation of permanent and solid prosperity for that country. Those things would continue to go on if only this House would give Ireland fair play. As to the new proprietors not being absolutely faithful to their engagements under the Land Act, so long as it was humanely possible they would fulfil their obligations, and no man who knew the facts would suggest any doubt as to their honesty and good faith. Therefore those loans were quite safe. He asked the House, however, to consider their position. They were now passing through the most critical transformation of their country in Irish history. Owing to the coming together of all parties and classes and creeds in Ireland the land had now passed to the ownership of the tenants. They were now on the eve of great changes in the way of educational enlightenment, of enterprise, and of the allocation of new capital to Irish industries, and within the next ten or twenty years the new peasant proprietors in Ireland would obtain a much firmer grip upon British markets in regard to a great many things besides cattle. This, however, would have to be a slow and gradual process, and if they were suddenly and without a moment's notice to strike this terrible blow at the cattle industry, which was the very life of agriculture in Ireland, he ventured to say that they would be inflicting upon these new peasant proprietors a money loss every year which the best judges he had heard on the subject calculated would mean at the very lowest as much as the yearly payments for their holdings. No British statesman could contemplate with equanimity the consequences of a precipitate adoption of this Bill, which would be an act of rashness. It would be all the more inexcusable now that Ireland was on the high road to success. He asked the Members of the Labour Party and the Members of the House generally who did not wish to see agriculture abolished in Ireland to think very carefully before they went into the Lobby to support a Bill which really affected only the limited interest of a few big grazers, which would expose British agriculture to other dangers, and which might very easily, indeed, embark them upon a sea of anarchy or ruin just at the moment when the Irish people had an opportunity such as they had not had for centuries past of working out their own salvation.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): This debate has been remarkable for the ability of the speeches which have been delivered and the great knowledge of the subject which has been displayed by those who have addressed the House. The speeches have had a fervid and impassioned character beyond what we are usually accustomed to on Friday afternoons. We have had very strong language used, dreadful predictions made, and some words so violent hurtling through the air that Mr. Speaker has had to stretch out his hand and stop them in their career. I will endeavour to be dispassionate. There are two questions in the subject before the House. The first is whether it is right to have a statutory bar to prevent cattle being brought into this country from Canada. The second is whether cattle should be admitted from Canada. The first point is one that has arisen only within the last ten years. In 1896 a Bill was carried through both Houses of Parliament which was strenuously opposed by the Liberal Party, because we thought it was an interference with the proper control by Parliament from year to year over a subject which affects the people of this country very closely, because it stereotyped for a long time, if not for ever, a particular order of things, and because it constituted a practical interference with the freedom of that House of Parliament which represents the people directly, by interposing the necessity, in order to obtain any relaxation of the rules imposed, of obtaining the assent of the other House of Parliament. I am as much opposed to that legislation now as I was at that time, on the grounds which I have named. Moreover, I am disposed to view with disfavour anything which seems to be a slight on a great Colony of this Empire—that may be a somewhat novel character for me to appear in according to the views and the endless assertions of hon. Members opposite—a Colony whose interests we are bound to consider to the utmost of our power. We have heard of proposals for the preferential treatment of Canada. But the Act of 1896 is penalising treatment, and I am lost in amazement that the Imperialist Party opposite, who talk so much about the Colonies, should insist with such tenacity and almost ferocity as they have done upon a measure which they know to be distasteful to the majority of the people of Canada and which really casts a stigma upon the agriculture of that Colony. Those are the views which I hold on the subject. I prefer infinitely the old system of leaving these matters to the discretion of the Board of Agriculture. If the Board of Agriculture is not strong enough, is not competent, is not well advised by the best expert opinion, then we should strengthen the Board of Agriculture. I believe that it is perfectly competent to embrace all the facts that are necessary, to weigh them and to understand them, and to act as a watch-dog to prevent disease from being introduced into this country. A great deal has been said as to whether Canadian cattle should be introduced into this country, and we have had most diverse opinions from the different branches of the farming industry. Ultima Thule said one thing, the Highlands another; the east of Scotland had one opinion, the south-west another; the north of England, the Midlands, Norfolk, and Suffolk all have an opinion. I do not know that the south of England has spoken out very strongly. Ireland has a strong and almost unanimous opinion. We have all these different opinions, so that we are dealing here not with any agricultural question as a whole, but with the different branches of agriculture with their separate interests, separate prejudices, and it may be separate ideas on the subject. That constitutes a very mixed state of things. I believe that in the present circumstances there will be a case for the immediate removal of legislative restrictions, and the placing of the matter under the authority of the Board of Agriculture in regard to the admission of Canadian cattle. But I think we ought to consider very fully and sympathetically the nervousness which is felt in many divisions of the country, even if we are not satisfied that that nervousness is entirely justified by the facts. I take two instances. There is a great and, I believe, beneficent and promising transformation going on in agriculture in the direction of the larger employment of the soil for the purposes of dairy farming and the removal of it from other purposes. That, of course, is a thing to be encouraged; at all events, it should be allowed a free course. But I can conceive few things more likely to check it, and prevent its rapid development either here or in Ireland, than a really intense fear of the importation of disease. Again, I recognise the force of the argument used by my hon. friend the Member for Cork that the present transitional state of affairs in Ireland ought to be dealt with very cautiously. I go not upon uncertainties, not upon wise predictions, but it may be on fears for which there is not very much ground on the part of those who entertain them, that mischief may be done by all these things. It is not unnatural that there should be hesitation in immediately adopting the policy of throwing the ports open. For my part, I have the good fortune to live in a part of the world where cattle are fattened, and my neighbours, so far as I am aware, with very few exceptions, are in favour of the earliest possible admission of Canadian cattle under proper restrictions, and with proper precautions, of course. A year or more ago I had occasion to meet a number of the farmers of my neighbourhood. They told me their views and I expressed my sympathy with those views, knowing what a material matter it was to them to have the most abundant source of supply for their business, but I took occasion to warn them that I very much doubted whether the House of Commons, and, above all, the other House of Parliament would be likely at the first blowing of the trumpet to lower these walls of Jericho. I observe that a noble Lord yesterday said that I was engaged in explaining away my statements, but I have said enough to show that my statements have not to be explained away, and that they have merely to be repeated here. While I fully sympathised with the desire of my neighbours, and while willing to give them a hand in endeavouring to bring it about, yet I thought they must not be too sanguine and expect that it could be done in a day. The hon. Member for Cork City said this legislation did not give any permanent exclusion of Canadian or other cattle, and it could be repealed if the circumstances justified it. I think my hon. friend on reflection will see that it is not easy to repeal an Act of Parliament even if the necessity for it has long passed away.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: I only suggested that it would probably be easier for a Government to do so than a private Member.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Oh yes, a good thing is good from either source, and a bad thing bad. But the question before the House now is whether we are to remain hide-bound by an Act of Parliament which leaves the House of Commons no direct power over this matter, and which departs from the old principle of leaving the discretion to the properly-constituted public authority, which appears to be the wholesome way to leave this. The second question is as to the merits of the policy of soon introducing Canadian cattle, and on that I recognise the great differences of opinion, not only among Members of the House, but among different interests in particular parts of the country. Seeing that that is so, I think the House ought to be left, in a question such as this, without the interference of the ordinary influences of Party, and, having explained what my own feelings and views on the subject are, I wish to say that the Government have no desire to interfere in any way with the action of the House.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said he would not trespass at any length on the attention of the House. He believed it was exceedingly unfortunate that in a matter of such grave importance no Member who sat on the benches behind him had yet risen to take part in this debate. The Prime Minister, who was naturally anxious to intervene in the debate, had not the advantage of hearing the view of any representative on the benches behind him of the case against the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had heard only one representative from Ireland, and he must have seen from the large number of Members on both sides of the House who had risen whenever a speaker sat down that the general interest taken in this question was very great. He thought the Prime Minister had failed to appreciate to the full the meaning and importance of the comment made by the hon. Member for Cork. It was not a question of the thing being good or bad as it proceeded from the Government or a private Member. The question raised was whether a subject so important as this, and which affected as this did so many interests in the country, and being dependent for its solution upon information for which the Government and the Government alone should be responsible, should be left in the hands of a private Member for solution, whether it was either fair or reasonable to expect that the subject could be adequately debated on a Friday afternoon, knowing that a very limited number of Members could possibly take part in the debate. The Premier had told them what his views were, and he was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman did not wish to be assured by him that any opinion which he expressed, whether they agreed with him or not, would be received with respect. The right hon. Gentleman would understand him when he said that they were entitled in a debate of this kind not to hear merely the opinion of the Prime Minister, important though it undoubtedly was, and entitled as it unquestionably was to respect and consideration, but that they ought to have had to-day—and he hoped the House would hear before this debate terminated —what the opinion of the Board of Agriculture was. What was the course recommended by the Prime Minister? It was that they should revert to the condition of things existing before 1896, and that the discretion as to the exclusion of these cattle or cattle from any other part of the world—because the argument was as good in one part as the other; it applied equally to cattle permanently excluded under Acts of Parliament as to the Canadian cattle they were now discussing—should be left in future to the Board of Agriculture. Yet, what assurance had they got that the discretion would ever be exercised by the Board of Agriculture? What evidence had they to-day that the opinion of the Board of Agriculture was voiced by the Prime Minister? The Board of Agriculture had a representative in this House, and so far he had taken no part in the debate The President of the Board of Agriculture had spoken in another place and in the country, and certainly, though the noble Lord declared himself on both those occasions unable to express what the views of the Government were, it was not difficult to ascertain that if he were free to express the opinion of the Board of Agriculture he would have said what the Board said in 1896. If the advice of the Prime Minister was to be taken and if it was to be left to the discretion of the Board of Agriculture, what assurance had they that the Board of Agriculture in excluding or attempting to exclude these cattle would be allowed to act on their own opinions any more than they were allowed to act on their own opinions to-day? He was responsible for the carrying of the Act of 1896, and he used then words which he would venture to quote to the House to-day. He said then that he thought it his duty to state what the view of the Department he represented was. He said that it was the opinion of the Department that a very serious responsibility was cast upon them in the discharge of its very difficult duty; that they felt it was impossible to be satisfied that pleuro-pneumonia had not been imported at any time under the existing regulations; that it was disease extremely obscure in character, and that it often lay latent in an animal for a long period and that occasionally it was almost by mere accident that it was discovered. These were his views as the head of the Department for which he was responsible, and they were the views of every Member of the Department in 1896. They were the views of the veterinary officers who had had unrivalled experience in dealing with these cases. He thought if they adopted or rejected regulations to-day they were entitled to know whether the views of 1896 were the views of 1906, and if they had been altered then he was entitled to ask why they had been altered, and what was the ground for holding a different opinion now from the opinion which on behalf of the Department he expressed ten years ago. He was not going to deal with the question of Protection. They had had some pretty fighting on both sides on this very small point. There were hon. Gentlemen in this House who found Protection in everything which was suggested, in every kind of Bill, and were very indignant because it was an invasion of the sacred rights of Free Trade. But if it was an invasion of Free Trade, surely it was a case for preference of one Colony to another. He thought they could leave that argument where it was. For his part he had never hesitated to face the argument about a Protection side of the question. What he had asked the House of Commons before, he asked again to-day. It was, if it could be established—and it had been established by the speeches made by hon. Gentlemen who opposed the Bill to-day—that these restrictions were necessary in the interest of the health of our stock. Were we to refuse to take advantage of our insular position and to remove regulations which were justified by results because it was possible for some ingenious persons to find another application of some shred of that protection to which they were so entirely opposed? Were they to abandon the regulations which alone had given the clean bill of health we had to-day because it followed from their application that there was some measure of protection to the poor farmers in Ireland who raised this store stock? The hon. Member for East Norfolk, in dealing with the question, had related a piteous story about Norfolk farmers, but, like many another story, it lacked completion. The hon. Member said the Norfolk farmer could not get stock to-day except at higher prices. The hon. Member for Lichfield, who followed, showed that if they took the price of store stock throughout the country generally there had been a fall in the price and an increase in the number. The hon. Member for East Norfolk did not agree with that. But this was a case where both were right. The general supply of stores had increased by some 300,000 and the price had fallen about £1 or 21s. But the hon. Member for East Norfolk could not get the stores he wanted. When they talked of stores they talked of yearlings or animals two years old at the most. But the hon. Member for East Norfolk wanted the beasts for which Norfolk was famous—cattle which had spent three and a-half years in Canada. The hon. Member complained that they could not now get that class of animal. The same thing obtained exactly with a small section of men in Scotland. When they come to him in a deputation they told him he was taking their livelihood from them. He asked them what their livelihood was, and they told him that it consisted of buying three-year-olds and keeping them three months in Scotland, and then selling them as prime Scotch beef. That might be the principle of free trade, but it was not the principle of fair agriculture. The hon. Member for Cork, who had spoken on behalf of Ireland, and other Gentlemen had been met with the statement that they were afraid of competition. The introduction of the Act of 1896 and the determination of the Government to carry that measure had nothing to do with the question of competition. What had been their experience? If the House cared to go back to the period from 1860 to 1866 or 1867, when the question of disease in the lower animals of this country had assumed serious proportions, they would find that the agricultural interest of the country was so paralysed by the possible results of disease, that men were afraid to employ their capital in raising great herds because at any moment they were liable to be devastated by disease. That cost the country many millions of money. Lord Aberdare, when he was dealing with this subject many years ago, stated that it cost over six millions sterling to the country in extermination and loss to capital. He had a great admiration for the hon. Member for York, who had spoken, as he was entitled to speak, for the great colony of which he was a worthy and distinguished representative in this House. He himself had had a great many interviews with Canadian statesmen and Ministers of Agriculture on this question. He discussed it in 1896, and had discussed it often since that time with the Agents-General in this country. He thought the hon. Gentleman's eloquence gave as much power and authority to the charge of stigma as it was possible for anybody to give to it. He did not think that in reality the action of the Government was regarded as putting any stigma on the Dominion. The hon.

Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill had made a remark the importtance of which he did not apparently quite realise. Interrupting the hon. Member for Lichfield, the hon. Member had said that the Canadian Minister of Agriculture stated he did not know of the existence of pleuro-pneumonia in Canada. He wished to know whether he meant that he did not know it existed or whether he meant that the disease did not exist at all.

MR. CAIRNS: He says it is unknown in Canada.

MR. WALTER LONG said there was all the difference in the world between saying "It does not exist," and saying "I do not know of its existence." There was evidence of the existence of the disease in many of the herds in Canada. It might be disputed. They had had disputes with the Canadian Government whether the pleuro-pneumonia introduced from Canada was pleuro-pneumonia or not. It was no offence to the Canadian representatives to describe it so, and no discredit to the home Government that they in their responsible position adhered to their views. It was no offence to the great Dominion of Canada to say to-day what they said in 1896, that the invasion of our herds by disease was the greatest injury that could possibly be inflicted upon the best and largest branch of British agriculture. They had only succeeded in getting the clean bill of health they had to-day by imposing strict regulations and keeping out of this country stock in regard to which it had to be said that, although they might be perfectly healthy, it was possible at any moment that disease might occur, and if that disease found its way into this country the loss to stockowners and the British public would be incalculable. The last case he had to deal with when he was at the Board of Agriculture was that in which pleuro-pneumonia broke out in a herd of cattle, and it was absolutely necessary that every head of that herd and all the cattle that had come into contact with them should be destroyed. That cost the country £15,000. The country was liable to that at any moment if the regulations were withdrawn. The question had been discussed to-day as if it exclusively affected farmers. It had, relatively speaking, very little to do with farmers. If they profited by the experience they had gained in the Board of Agriculture, and by the experience which the Board could give to-day if they spoke through their representative, they would find that millions had been spent in exterminating disease. They had tried to exterminate disease by slaughter at the port and they had tried by waiting until the disease was detected, but they never met with any success until they took advantage of the fact that we were on an island with a real boundary which enabled us to protect ourselves in this matter by excluding cattle from other countries, Since then what had happened? It was said this was a consumer's question. In what way? He wondered if the introducer of the Bill had seen, as he had seen, foreign cattle arrive in this country. These cattle went for immediate slaughter and there was no greater boon to the poorer people of this country than the enormous impetus given to that trade by the regulations. There was provided to them a large supply of good meat which by the circumstances of its import had to be sold very rapidly. The result was that in every country village they would find on two or three days a week carts going round selling small joints at threepence and fourpence a pound. That had been the result as far as the consumer was concerned. Let the House be careful not to interfere with a result so beneficial to the people of this country. It was said that if this Bill passed stockowners would get more store cattle. But were they quite sure they would do so?

The number of Canadian cattle imported into this country had never reached in one year more than 140,000, and out of this how many were stores? Nobody knew, but it was believed to be only 25,000 or 30,000. And that was because the Canadians were learning to turn their store cattle into fat cattle, to be sold for a larger profit than could be obtained for stores. And what guarantee was there that the Canadians would not do the same again? They were not likely to sacrifice their own interests even to please the hon. Member for East Norfolk. He opposed the Bill because by the energy and devotion of the officials of the Board of Agriculture and the Privy Council, and by the wise policy of exclusion, we had preserved a clean bill of health for the stock of this country. He was old enough to remember the days when rinderpest and cattle plague devastated the country. Any one who remembered those days and had seen the cattle dying like flies, and farmers brought to ruin by a condition of things over which they had no control, must on those grounds alone offer strenuous opposition to this Bill. If they were going to let these colonial cattle in, they must have a much more rigorous inspection than they had at the present time. At the time of which he had spoken, millions of money were spent in exterminating the disease, and these millions came out of the pockets of the consumers. Did they want to go back to those days and to the probability of incurring the same heavy expenditure? The Prime Minister had talked about leaving the matter to the Board of Agriculture. It was not the Board of Agriculture he was afraid of, but the Cabinet which controlled that Board. The same principles would obtain as had obtained in the House to-day, and the present debate was in itself the strongest justification for the rejection of the measure. If the Board of Agriculture, through their representative, gave their opinion based on their own knowledge it would, he ventured to say, agree in every detail with the opinion he gave on behalf of the Board ten years ago. The real truth was that if a Bill of this kind were carried, not only would the case of the consumer be injured, but they would be embarking again in a great gamble with the food of the people. Under the old system shipowners embarked in this particular trade; they built ships to carry live cattle to this country. But what happened? Disease broke out on board ship at sea, and those cargoes were lost not only to the shipowners but to the British consuming public. We had now, however, got this trade established on a well-understood basis, and statistics had been quoted which showed that under the present law no injury had been caused to the British consumer. They had also heard the case from Ireland; and surely if there ever was a case in the world in which protection would be justified on behalf of the poor farmers of Ireland, who had done wonders in the last ten years to improve their stock and rear them for the English feeders, it was this case. He was entitled to speak for the Department with which he had had the honour to be associated for some years; and he could say with truth that their policy had had no connection with competition or the raising of prices. Their action had been based on conviction of what was best for the interests of all classes of people in this country. His opinion was then and now that the only way in which we could get security against disease was to take advantage of our position as an island and protect ourselves against the introduction of cattle disease into this country. He maintained that farmers generally, as well as stock breeders and feeders, would not embark their capital in an industry which was liable to such losses as had been experienced in the past. He held that this House had no right to expose them to such losses. These farmers and stock breeders were entitled to say to Parliament, "You are bound to protect us against this disease, from which we have suffered and of which we are now in fear, if you carry this Bill." He most earnestly hoped that in the interests of agriculture and of the community as a whole the House would reject the Bill the Second Reading of which had been moved.

*MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said he represented an agricultural constituency, and he could only say that if he were to vote against this Bill he would be afraid to face his constituents. The hon. Member for Litchfield had said that nine-tenths of the farmers were opposed to this Bill.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER: What I said was nine tenths of the farmers of Great Britain.

*MR. CROMBIE said that the majority of the farmers along the East Coast of Scotland, at any rate, were in favour of the Bill. The Scottish Chamber of Agriculture had repeatedly declared in favour of removing the restrictions on Canadian cattle. One would suppose from the speeches made against it that the Bill was meant to allow the entry of cattle into this country without any embargo whatever. If that were the object of the Bill he would be as keenly opposed to it as anyone. He represented a constituency which, if disease were imported into this country, would suffer as much as, if not more, than any other district; but his constituents were willing to see the Bill passed. They did not wish to remove the restrictions against the importation of foreign cattle entirely; they only desired to restore the condition of things which existed before 1896. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin had said that he had full confidence in the Board of Agriculture, but not in the Cabinet. In 1892, however, the Board of Agriculture dealt too drastically with the matter in the belief that there was disease amongst Canadian cattle, and they refused to admit them. But it had been shown that no disease really existed in Canadian cattle. 1,500,000 Canadian cattle had been slaughtered at our ports, and no disease had been found in a single one of them. He maintained that the existing system was pure protection. [Cries of "No, no."] It was protection of the worst form, because it excluded the raw material while it allowed in the manufactured article. His hon. friend's case was that the imports of meat from foreign countries had largely increased, and that the price of meat was cheaper than before; but by the present law they were driving an important industry abroad. He might be allowed to read the opinion of a farmer in his part of the country, who had a large experience in store cattle. That gentleman said—

> "I have myself ewes and lambs on land which twenty years ago let at almost £4 an acre, and a fourteen-stall stable is now fitted up as a lambing shed. The day is not far distant, unless there is a change in the shape of giving us more store cattle, when our arable farms will be the sheep runs of this country. What does that mean? It means more rural depopulation. On the farm I spoke of there are at present one caretaker and one shepherd, where a few years ago there were ten married ploughmen, two or three boys, and a few women employed. The bringing back of the population to the country is, to my mind, an easy matter. It is simply a matter of money. Put us in a position to earn more money from our land and we will very soon bring back the people from the towns. Give us access to the same markets for our store cattle as our competitors have."

He maintained that the restrictions on Canadian cattle at present were leading to great agricultural distress and to the depopulation of the country. The right hon. Member for South Dublin had said that his hon. friend the Member for East Norfolk and himself wanted to get store cattle that had lived for three years in Canada and a few months in this country, and then to sell them as prime butcher meat. All he could say was that they would have the greatest difficulty in doing so. It seemed to him that the present restrictions were simply undisguised protection. Coming from the Opposition side of the House he could not be surprised that it was supported there; but he was surprised that so many of his hon. friends who were returned two months ago to this House pledged as free traders were willing to bow down to the Baal of protection, because they recognised on the head of that many-visaged god the horns of their own cattle. He did not know if it was any use appealing to hon. Gentlemen opposite who declared that they were not protectionists, but at least they said they were in favour of colonial preference. He appealed to them, therefore, to give this preference to Canada. He noticed that the *Toronto Globe* stated that—

> "The removal of the embargo of Canadian cattle in Great Britain was at least as important to Canada as any preferential duty on grain which Great Britain is likely to impose."

On these grounds he asked his friends opposite to support the Bill, and he turned to his own friends and invited them, on the grounds of free trade also, to support this measure.

*Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that although he knew that it was not very palatable to the House he wished to read extracts from a document which had come from the constituency of the hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill. At a meeting of the North Eastern Agricultural Federation held in Newcastle-on-Tyne, on March 24th, the following circular-letter was approved, and a copy was ordered to be sent to each Member of the House of Commons—

> "Permit us, the members of the North-Eastern Agricultural Federation, directly representing over 2,000 tenant farmers in the Counties of Northumberland, Durham, and North Yorkshire, to place the following facts before you, in the hope that you will give them full consideration before recording your vote in the division on Mr. Cairns' Bill, on 6th April, for the free admission of foreign cattle. This is in no sense a question of Party politics with us, as our members are of all shades of political opinion; our action is solely due to a strong feeling of the dangers to which British cattle will be exposed by a reversal of the present policy of slaughter at the port of debarkation, under which we have for so many years enjoyed our present immunity from infectious disease amongst cattle.
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> "The immunity has enabled the British farmer to largely increase the numbers of cattle in this country, and, at the same time, it has been no hindrance to the free importation of fat cattle from abroad, nor has it had any effect in raising the price of beef to the consumer, as witness the constant and gradual fall in price during the time these regulations have been in force. We do not quote the figures in full, but in Newcastle Market the average price of beef in 1883 was 10s. 6¾d. per stone of 14lb., and since then there has been a gradual and almost regular fall to the low average of 7s. 7¼d. in 1905. This is sufficient proof that the consumer has not suffered by the restriction. Indeed, it is impossible that he can do so, as the free importation of fat cattle to be slaughtered on arrival provides for an ample and regular supply of fresh beef. On the other hand, the admission of foreign cattle to mix with our English herds would expose them to the constant danger of infection, would check production in consequence, and disorganise the industry generally, whilst an outbreak of disease would be disastrous to the farmer, and most serious to the consumer. The first effect would be to stop importation except in the form of frozen or chilled meat, and if a disease like foot-and-mouth disease (the commonest, and at the same time most infectious, but not most deadly, of the diseases we have been freed from) should gain a footing amongst our herds, the effect on the milk supply would be felt at once, as the milk of affected cows is absolutely unusable. The consumer would thus suffer from shortage of both beef and milk. That our fear of such infection is not baseless, the fact that both Argentina and the United States have suffered of recent years from outbreaks of disease is proof sufficient, and the following extracts from the Canadian Blue-book of 1904 show that Canadian cattle are at present suffering from various infectious diseases.
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> "On page 63 of the Blue book for that year, the Veterinary-Inspector-General, speaking of cattle mange (amongst several other diseases) says: 'The following figures will give some idea of the extent of the operations, and the magnitude of the problem which had to be faced in making an honest effort to stamp out this troublesome malady, which has for long been causing both directly and indirectly a large annual loss to the cattle owners of Western Canada. 411,061 cattle have been up to the present date dipped once, while of

these 176,685 have received the second treatment called for by the order. If the weather remains open for a few weeks, it is altogether likely that all of those reported to have been dipped once will have their second treatment completed, and that a considerable additional number will still be dealt with.'

"In view of the above figures, and of many others relating to other diseases of cattle, horses, sheep and pigs which appear in the Veterinary Inspector's Report in the same Blue-book, the contention that Canada is free from infectious diseases of live stock is amply proved to be untrue. Even if it was for the moment true, the impossibility of guarding the long land frontier of Canada renders that country always liable to infection from other parts of America.

"The following extract from the report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police shows the danger and difficulty that exists at present:—'For many years it has been a source of complaint on the part of our ranchers that American cattle were allowed to graze in Canada without restriction; that the owners often drove their cattle to the boundary, so that they would drift into Canada, where grass and water were more plentiful.' As many of the most serious cattle diseases can be carried by wild animals, it seems impossible that the extensive land frontier of Canada can ever be effectually guarded, leaving the country liable to constantly recurring outbreaks of disease. Under these circumstances we hope your vote will be given against any interference with the present arrangements, which, whilst safeguarding our cattle from disease, ensure a cheap and pentiful supply of beef to the consumer."

He would also read a quotation from a speech recently made by Sir Horace Plunkett, Vice President of the Board of Agriculture in Ireland, who was a practical man, had branches in America, and who knew all about the cattle trade in the United States as well as in Ireland. Sir Horace Plunkett said—

"It may be well to state briefly the general considerations which I think will secure the continuance of the *status quo*. It may be that at the moment Canadian cattle can show a clean bill of health; and while the existing restrictions remain they may, and I hope will continue in this condition. But if the restrictions were removed I do not believe it would be possible so to police the thousands of miles of border between the Republic and the Dominion as to safeguard us from the danger of admitting cattle from the United States. I speak with some knowledge on this subject, as I have been in charge of large herds of cattle on both sides of that border, and feel myself capable of dodging the police if I were in that line of business.

Just imagine the right hon. Gentleman dodging the police, although he dared say that he could do it as well as any other ordinary man!

"But in any case, the uncertainty as to the safety from disease of our flocks and herds would dislocate the entire cattle trade of the United Kingdom. The graziers on the rich lands of Leinster might reap some slight immediate, but not lasting, advantage. The owners of second-class lands would suffer for a time, at any rate, while the injury inflicted upon the breeders of young stock would probably be more permanent."

So much as to the efficiency of guarding the frontier. He would remind the House that the introduction of disease amongst cattle in the United Kingdom was a matter of extreme importance. It was only those who were really in the business who could realise what it meant. He remembered to his sorrow and his cost when the foot and mouth disease prevailed in Ireland, and when the cattle trade was dislocated; and later on the visitation of pleuro-pneumonia. He insisted that the agitation for the repeal of the present restrictions did not come from the consumers or the tenant farmers. [Loud cries of "Oh, oh."] Hon. Members had a right to differ from him, but he stated what he believed to be true. He believed that this agitation was engineered principally by shipowners and dock companies. That was his belief, and he knew that shipowners and dock companies had given large subscriptions in order to have this agitation engineered and carried on, and he defied contradiction to that simple statement of fact. It was to be assumed that those who were engaged in the cattle trade should have a knowledge of how the trade was carried on, and the House could have no conception of what it would mean to those engaged in that business if this Bill were passed, and the dislocation of trade which would result quite apart from the interest of the consumers. Those who supported the Bill entirely overlooked the fact that if it was passed into law it would lead to less stock being raised. This was not merely an Irish question; it affected the whole of the kingdom. If those who bred cattle at the present time were discouraged by this Bill what would happen? One could not raise cattle like mushrooms in a night. Then when the breeding of cattle had been lessened, and disease broke out and importations stopped, where would the supply come from? This was a crux which had not been touched upon by any other speaker. He claimed to know as much about this question as any other Member, as he was President of the Irish Cattle Traders and Stockowners Association and had been so for fourteen years. If a disease broke out the dealers in and feeders of cattle were in a good position—whether it was pleuro-pneumonia or foot-and-mouth disease—owing to the fact that the local authorities came in, seized and destroyed the cattle, and paid the owner their value. But what was the position of the unfortunate producer? He was in a very difficult position if his whole trade was shut up, by restrictions, general dislocation, and reduced demand. And yet hon. Members who knew nothing about this business introduced a Bill of this kind which would dislocate the whole cattle trade of the three kingdoms and brought it forward as a private Member's Bill. Might he suggest to the House that a matter of this kind which really went to the root of agriculture should not be brought forward in that way, because, under our system of free imports, the farmers were not able to grow corn at a profit and, therefore, agriculturists were dependent upon the animal industry. That being the state of things, they had a private Member bringing in a Bill of this kind which had to be disposed of in four hours, a Bill which disturbed the basis of the agricultural industry. This House ought not to decide a question so vital to the agriculturists of the three kingdoms in that hurried fashion. He protested against preferential rates being given by railway companies against British and Irish producers, and pointed out that if the system proposed by the Bill were carried out native producers would be in a worse position than they were now. Then there was the question of the introduction of diseases which were unknown in this country but which were known abroad. He had put a Question in the House of Commons and had appealed in vain to the military authorities not to allow a certain disease, viz., epizootic lymphangitis, to be introduced into this country through the medium of two horses. What happened? The disease came. Fairs were stopped and shows were prevented, but of course the opinions of private Members like himself, whose privileges had been so curtailed that they were reduced to being parts of a mere mechanical legislative machine, were not worthy of recognition. But what he had said all came true. Exactly the same thing might happen in regard to the diseases of cattle, of which hon. Members opposite were so profoundly ignorant, just as the Minister for War was ignorant of that horse disease about which he had put the Question during the Boer War. The Irish Party had been taunted by an hon. Member with the fact that Canada got no money from the British Exchequer. That might be so, but in his own country they had a 33 per cent. duty upon imported goods, and a quarantine of two months, and a poll tax upon every animal entering Canada. His hon. friend came as an advocate of free trade. Was that his idea of it? Those who paid the piper had the right to call the tune, and he thought that Irishmen paid far and away more than their just ratio of taxation but they were not free agents in regard to its imposition or if anything was to be discussed in regard to it. Ireland paid about five millions too much a year in taxation, too, and now hon. Members wanted to destroy their cattle trade. He thought he had a right to speak, as he could claim a larger constituency in this matter than any other hon. Member of the House. He was President of the Irish Cattle Traders and Stockowners Association, which had members in every county in Ireland, and he thought he had a right to speak. That association had passed a resolution against this Bill, as had also the Dublin County Council. Every agricultural and leading association had passed resolutions; he had received 150 resolutions against this measure. The Irish people had good reason to resist this legislation, because upon it largely depended the future of Ireland, and he appealed to the sense of fair play of the House to see that it was not passed. Irish farmers had taken advantage of the Land Act, never anticipating such a change as this, which would tend to reduce the value of their produce and to that extent reduce their ability to pay their instalments. It was an extraordinary thing, moreover, for the Government to acquiesce in legislation that would tend to reduce the value of its Irish land securities. Ireland had the cleanest bill of animal health in the world at present, because there was no importation of foreign disease, and the veterinary department were skilful and energetic. He therefore trusted that if a division was taken the Bill would be rejected.

MR. HOWARD (Cumberland, Eskdale) opposed the Bill, and said that if passed it would be detrimental to the cattle-breeding industry in the country. As a Liberal he came from one of those constituencies which had done much for the free trade cause, and constituencies of that sort were solid against the repeal of the Act which dealt with the importation of cattle. His hon. friend the Member for York had made an appeal to the democracy of the country, but he would like hon. Members to remember that they had a democracy in the rural districts. This was a farmers', not a landlords', question. In the event of cattle being slaughtered on account of an outbreak of disease, two-thirds of the cost would fall on the rates and a third on the farmer. The hon. Member for York had said that there had been no disease during the last four years, but when he was in the States in January, 1903, there was an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease which decimated the whole of the cattle of that part of the States. He believed it would be fraught with the very gravest danger if the Bill were passed into law. That Canada asked for such a Bill was no reason for passing it. The first duty of the House was to have regard to the agricultural interest of this country. The existing restriction in no way infringed the principle of free trade, and it conduced to the preservation of our cattle-breeding industry in a sound condition.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York) asked where was the Canadian grievance? Canada had the great cornfields of the world, with unbounded means for the growing and fattening of Canadian cattle. She did not get the price of store meat for them as she would if the Bill was passed, but she got the full price of the fat animal. Figures showed that this was a great and growing market for Canada. In 1902–3 her exports of live cattle to this country were £1,500,000. In the following year they had grown to £3,000,000. We could not teach the Canadian his business. What good would this Bill do to the consumer in this country? What sources of meat supply had he at present? First of all the prime meat grown in this country, then the meat grown in Canada, America, and the Argentine, which came alive to our ports and was killed there and sold as fresh meat, and thirdly the immense supplies of dead meat from America and other countries. How was this Bill going to do the consumer any good? Suppose it was passed, and Canada no longer sent fresh meat but stores which were fattened in this country. How was this going to help the consumer? At present he was able to get meat which was killed at the port of entry, considerably cheaper than meat grown and killed in this country. To a certain extent the cattle were bruised on the voyage and the meat when it arrived was not in a prime condition, but it was a second grade fresh meat. By this Bill they would cut off this second grade meat which was now open to the consumer in this country. He asked them to take the point of view of the breeders. The breeders were not all millionaires. They were not in the same category with the owners of gold mines in South Africa. There were breeders of all classes. Ninety out of a hundred breeders in this country were small men. The passage of this Bill would hang a sword over the heads of all the breeders in this country—the sword of possible disease. He did not think that was a fair position to put breeders in. The Prime Minister had said he was going to turn the land into a treasure house for the nation. This was a nice start.

Mr. CAIRNS rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put," but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

RAILWAYS.

Bill to amend the Regulation of Railways Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Stopford Brooke, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Gooch, and Mr. Rowlands.

RAILWAYS BILL.

"To amend the Regulation of Railways Acts," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 157.]

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 9th April, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [Lords]; Mersey Railway Bill [Lords]; Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]; Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Carlisle Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]; Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Standing Order 207 was read and amended, in line 5, by leaving out the words "to be taken at the beginning of an Evening Sitting," and inserting the words "by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means," instead thereof.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Blackburn; Kingston-upon-Hull; Perth; Perthshire; Rotherham; and Wrexham; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Stoke-upon-Trent, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Cardiff; Clapham; Hammersmith; Maldon and National British Women's Temperance Association; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; from Alverthorpe; Alvington; Anbourne; Appleby; Ashburton; Ashton-on-Ribble; Barnstaple (two); Barrow (two); Barrowford (three); Batley; Beckenham (six); Birkenhead (four); Blackburn (two); Blackrod (two); Boston; Bramshaw; Bromley (four); Bromley Common (two); Burnley (two); Burnley St. Andrew's (two); Burnsall; Bury (two); Bury St. Stephen's (two); 'Canterbury (nine); Chatham; Chelsea; Chelsfield; Chevening (two); Chipping Sodbury (two)

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Cockermouth (two); Codnor; Colva; Conisholme; Consett (two); Cranbrook (two); Cranham; Dallington; Davidstowe; Deane (two); Denton; Derby; Dodworth; Durham; East and West Barkwith (two); East Woodhay; Eastoft; Eckington (two); Edenfield; Epworth; Eyam; Farnborough (two); Farnworth; Fawley; Freckenham; Freston; Fritwell (two); Gillingham (two); Great Warley; Griffithstown (two); Harrowden Magna cum Harrowden Parva (two); Hayes; Hessett (two); Hill (two); Hopton (two); Horsmonden; Ide Hill; Ipswich (two); Isham; Kingsthorpe (two); Knockholt (two); Langton by Wragby; Lanteglos by Camelford; Lanteglos and St. Adwen; Leckhampton; Leesfield; Littleham cum Exmouth; Llanfynydd (two); Llanwenarth Ultra; Lyndhurst (two); Manchester (twenty-one); Marchwood; Medowsley; Melton; Midhurst; Milford-on-Sea (two); Minstead (two); Monmouth (three); Musbury and Ewood Bridge; Neatishead; Nelson (two); Newchurch (two); Northampton (three); North Cockerington; Olveston and Elberton; Openshaw; Orford (two); Orton Longueville; Otterton; Padiham; Pauntley (two); Pemberton; Pendlebury St. John's (two); Plaistow; Preston; Preston near Ledbury (two); Ravenstone (two); Rawtenstall (two); Rodington; Roehampton (two); Rhulen; Rushford; St. Enoder; St. Mabyn; St. Mary's in the Marsh; Salcott; Samlesbury (two); Sebargham; Sevenoaks (two); Sotby (two); South Somercotes; Stalybridge (three); Stamford; Stock and Buttsbury; Stratton; Sudbourne (two); Swansea; Swinton; Tynemouth; Underriver (four); Wakefield; Warmfield (three); Weeke (two); Wellingborough; Westborough cum Dry Doddington; Westbury (two); Westgate; Westleigh St. Peter's (two); Wensley Fold; Whelnetham; Wilmington; Winmarleigh; Woolsthorpe; and Wyke (four); to lie upon the Table.

TUBERCULOSIS (ANIMALS) PREVENTION AND COMPENSATION BILL.

Petition from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Return [presented 28th March] to be printed. [No. 115.]

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of General Report and Statistics for the year 1904, Part IV., Colonial and Foreign Statistics; Statistics relating to Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (TREATMENT OF SELECTED MALE CRIMINAL PRISONERS).

Copy presented, of Draft of Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, appropriating Borstal Prison and part of Lincoln Prison to Selected Male Criminal Prisoners, and providing as to the Treatment of Selected Male Criminal Prisoners between the ages of 16 and 21 under Special Rules [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY

Copy presented, of Report of the Astronomer to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th March; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

PENNY POSTAGE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd April; *Mr. Henniker Heaton*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report on the Banking, Railway, and Shipping Statistics of Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3549 to 3551 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 646 and 647 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an Exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Royal Imperial Austrian Postal Administration, dated the 28th October/10th November, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Public Records (Prison Commission.) Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Expenses of Seamen Invalided Home.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Crawley, a seaman, who was discharged from the s.s. "Thyra" on 3rd August, 1903, at Pedang; whether he is aware that at the time of Crawley's discharge from the ship there was due to him as wages the sum of £23 6s. 6d.; that on the arrival of Crawley in the United Kingdom the whole of his wages had been used for the purpose of his conveyance home, and for other expenses, and that the Board of Trade accounted that he was in debt to them to the amount of £3 5s. 10d., although they had appropriated the whole of his wages; and whether he will state the disease from which Crawley was suffering.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My attention has been called to the case referred to by my hon. friend, and the facts are practically in accordance with his statement. The seaman was suffering from malaria, which the Board of Trade are advised does not constitute hurt or injury in the service of the ship, and the wages therefore appear to have been properly applied towards the payment of the expenses. The excess of £3 5s. 10d. is not a debt due from Crawley, but has been paid by the owners of the "Thyra." I am considering whether it is possible to amend the law so as to minimise the hardship to the seamen in such cases.

Dangers of Taking Diachylon.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the circumstances connected with two recent inquests at Sheffield have been brought to his notice; whether he is aware that the taking of diachylon, a powerful and poisonous drug, which resulted in the deaths mentioned above, is an increasing practice among many women, who through ignorance of the properties of the drug are doing their health serious injury; and whether he can see his way to have this drug and its preparations scheduled as a poison.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Several representations on the subject of the taking of diachylon have been received, and my notice has been called to one of the recent cases at Sheffield. I am informed, however, that the Lord President of the Council, who is in charge of the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill now before the House of Lords, is advised that to schedule diachylon as a poison would not mitigate the evil which is complained of.

Expenditure under Marine Works (Ireland) Act.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give details of expenditure under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act to date, showing which works have now been completed and which are in progress; what other works have been agreed upon between the Irish Government and the county councils concerned; and what is the unexpended balance of the grant at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The following table shows the expenditure incurred up to 31st March, 1906—

Name of Works.	Amount of Expenditure. £	s.	d.	Completed or in Progress.
Cape Clear, county Cork - - - -	3,210	2	5	In progress.
Liscannor, county Clare - - - -	5,816	7	8	,,
Roundstone, county Galway - - -	1,949	4	0	Completed.
Kilronan - - - - - - -	1,684	0	5	In progress.
Cleggan - - - - - - -	2,112	7	1	,,
Kinvarra - - - - - - -	1,094	1	5	,,
Gortnasate, county Donegal - - -	2,114	3	1	,,
Downies Bay - - - - - -	2,064	3	10	,,
Portnoo - - - - - - -	1,328	11	10	,,
Cladnageragh - - - - - -	1,030	0	1	Completed.
Maintenance Fund - - - - -	1	10	0	
General Charges - - - - - -	124	17	2	
	22,529	9	0	

No other works have yet been agreed upon between the Irish Government and the county councils, because no other schemes have arrived at the stage at which reference to county councils becomes requisite. The unexpended balance of the grant of £100,000 under the Marine Works Act amounts to £77,470 11s., but this balance includes not only the sums necessary to complete the works already in progress, but also a large sum which was provisionally set aside for expenditure upon a harbour at Innishlyre, county Mayo the negotiations as to which have been suspended.

Wei-hai-Wei—Unexpended Balance.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for War if any money already voted by Parliament for military purposes at Wei-hai-Wei still remains unexpended; and to what purposes this money will be allotted, in view of the proposal to disband the Chinese troops.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Parliament has voted the pay, etc., of the Chinese Regiment for the year 1906–7. Some of this money will be used to defray the expenses of disbanding the regiment. The balance will, I hope, be saved.

Army Policy.

COLONEL HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to securing continuity of Army policy, and in order to remove misconceptions arising from the diverse interpretation of terms used in connection with Imperial defence and with the territorial organisation of the Army, he will consider the advisability of following the precedent set in 1893 by the present Prime Minister when Secretary of State for War, and authorise the publication by the department of the General Staff of a handbook in popular form, setting forth the objects and the course pursued by the military policy of the nation from the year 1870 to the present time, with special reference to the period from 1893 to 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Army Book of the British Empire, to which my hon. and gallant friend presumably alludes, is in course of revision, but it is not likely to be ready for publication for some months.

Soldiers and Police and the Gaelic Athletic Association.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a meeting of the athletic council of the Gaelic Athletic Association held at Cork, where the chairman justified the action of the executive council of the association in refusing to allow members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and His Majesty's soldiers and sailors to take part in athletic sports under their auspices; and whether he intends to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am not aware of the matter alluded to in the Question. I do not propose to take any action.

Crime in the 16th Lancers.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, has yet furnished the report of his inquiry as to the cause of the amount of punishment in the 16th Lancers during the twelve months ending 28th February last; if so, will he inform the House as to the general nature of that report; and, in view of the condition of this regiment, will he consider the advisability of appointing an officer from some other regiment to the command of the 16th Lancers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The report in question has been received, and is under consideration. As I have already informed my hon. friend, the report is confidential.

Army Meat Contracts.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary of State for War by whose authority contractors for the supply of frozen mutton to the Army were prohibited from offering foreign as well as colonial mutton; on what grounds that prohibition was made; and whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to maintain that prohibition.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The decision to confine the supplies of frozen mutton to the Colonies was made by the War Office in 1902 on the authority of the Financial Secretary. The foreign frozen mutton, which comes from Argentina, while cheaper than New Zealand, was dearer than Australian mutton, and was considered not always satisfactory in quality. It was accordingly decided to give the preference to the colonial supplies. I am of opinion that quality and price should alone be considered on these contracts.

Suggested Weekly Payment of Army Pensions.

MR. BECK (Cambridge, Wisbech): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the number of ex-soldiers who seek poor relief, he will consider the desirability of Army pensions being paid weekly instead of, as now, monthly or quarterly.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This matter is now receiving my most careful consideration.

The Natal Garrison.

MR. HAROLD COX: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether there are any other British troops now in Natal in addition to the remnant of the Royal Garrison Artillery; what is the composition of this additional force, if any; what is the estimated cost per diem of this force, including due allowance for the cost of housing, training, and pensioning; and how much of that daily cost is to be contributed by the Colony of Natal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The 2nd battalion Cameron Highlanders has been moved temporarily into Natal. There are also the necessary departmental details. The daily cost is estimated at £245. The colony will pay all extra expenditure resulting from the move; but the normal cost of maintaining the force remains chargeable to Army funds.

Canadian Import Duty on Malt Flour.

MR. WHITBREAD (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Canadian import duty on malt flour has been raised since January 1st, 1904, to an amount which is nearly four times the amount of the duty previous to that date, while the duty on other malt extracts remains at the amount fixed previous to January, 1904, and that both classes of malt extracts are imported for the same purpose, for use by bakers; whether the Colonial Office has received any communication on the subject from the Board of Trade; and whether he contemplates making any representation on the subject to the Canadian Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The late Secretary of State received representations on this subject through the Board of Trade, and these were communicated by him to the Canadian Government last October; and the Governor-General has reported that the matter was referred to the Commissioners who were inquiring into the working of the Canadian Customs Tariff.

Land Reserved for Natives in Natal.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the area of land reserved for the natives in Natal and under the administration of the Natal Native Trust; whether the Natal Native Trust is responsible to the Natal Government or to the Colonial Office; and whether the regulations under which the natives are permitted to occupy these reserved lands are in any way subject to the approval of the Home Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The area of reserved land referred to is stated to consist of forty-two locations, comprising approximately 2,198,568 acres. The Natal Native Trust is a Corporation constituted by the Letters Patent of the 27th April, which gives to one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State power to disallow and cancel any rule, order, or resolution made by the corporation in virtue of the powers conferred on them by the Letters Patent, *i.e.*, powers to take and hold, grant, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of land for the advantage and well-being of the natives. The regulations under which natives are permitted to occupy such lands do not come within the scope of the Letters Patent, but are provided for by legislation of the Natal Parliament.

Report of Inter-Colonial Customs Conference at Pietermaritzburg.

MR. WEDGEWOOD BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received a report of the decisions of the Inter-colonial Customs Conference at Pietermaritzburg; and whether he will cause them to be published as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) There has not yet been time to receive the decisions of the Conference by mail, and it will be necessary to consult the South African Governments after their receipt as to publication.

Martial Law in Natal.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies by what legal authority martial law has been proclaimed in Natal; how long it will be continued; who is responsible for its continuance; and whether the ordinary courts of Natal are sitting.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Martial law has been proclaimed in Natal by the Governor on the advice of his Ministers. I would also refer the hon. Member to my Answer to the hon. Member for North Lambeth,† given in the House to-day. It is not possible to say, at present, how long it will be continued. The Government of Natal are responsible for its continuance. The ordinary courts of the Colony are sitting.

Labourers in Portuguese, East Africa.

SIR C. HILL (Shrewsbury): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what proportion of the labourers from Portuguese East Africa who are employed in the Transvaal mines come from within the tropics; what is the rate of mortality per thousand of such labourers; and whether it is proposed to put a stop to their recruitment; if so, when will the prohibition come in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Return received for January shows that, out of 67,989 natives from Portuguese East Africa, 2,116 came from Mozambique, and 822 from Quilimane. The rate of mortality among the labourers from tropical areas was 118·9 per 1,000 for the first ten months of 1905, according to Lord Selborne's telegram published at page 44 of Cd. 2819, which also shows that recruiting ceased on 31st January, and will not be resumed unless the mortality Returns for the year ending 30th June, 1906, show marked improvement.

Irish Land Act—Expenses Incurred through Treasury Intervention.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the number of cases in which the Treasury have incurred costs or expenses by intervening under the Irish Land Act of 1903 from its enactment to the end of March, 1906; the number of these cases in which the decisions have been adverse to the contention of the Treasury; the gross amount of costs and expenses incurred by the Treasury in these latter cases; the share of this amount due to intervention initiated under the late Government; the share due to intervention initiated under the present Government; and in what Votes on the Estimates are such costs and expenses included.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Total number of cases in which Treasury have incurred costs or expenses up to the 31st March, 1906, 20. Number of these cases in which decisions have been adverse to the contention of the Treasury, 6. Gross amount of costs and expenses incurred by the Treasury in these latter cases, £217 9s. Share of this amount due to intervention initiated under the late Government, all. To what Vote on Estimate are such costs and expenses included, Law Charge Vote (Ireland).

Publication of the MSS. of the Chartulary of St. Thomas's Abbey, Dublin.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the MS. of the Chartulary of St. Thomas's Abbey, Dublin, by the late Mr. John Gilbert, is actually completed and ready for Press; and if he will agree to its being published by the Record Commission in the Master of the Rolls series, in view of the great value and historic interest of the chartulary and in view also of the fact that its publication will complete the series already commenced by the publication of the Chartulary of St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am not sure that I quite understand the hon. Baronet's Question. The Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr, Dublin, edited by the late Sir John Gilbert, was published in 1889 in the "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain" Series (the "Rolls Series.") The Record Commission has been extinct for more than half a century.

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† See col. 985.

Tenure of Office of the Judge Advocate-General.

Mr. PAUL: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Lords of the Treasury have given their sanction by any warrant, order, or other document to the proposition that Mr. Milvain has a right of continuing in office as Judge Advocate-General until he attains the age of seventy, or for any other fixed period.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The War Office was informed in August last that no objection would be offered by the Board of Treasury to the retention of Mr. Milvain in the office of Judge Advocate-General until he should attain the age of seventy.

Board of Education and St. Mary's Catholic School, Bolton.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that St. Mary's Catholic school, Bolton, was built subject to the provisions of the Act of 1902, whereby the maintenance and furnishing was to be met by the local education authority; can he state why the declared policy of the Board should be reversed whilst a school is being built; and whether, in view of the sum spent in the building of this new school, he will arrange that the provisions of the Act of 1902 as regards furnishing shall be strictly adhered to.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am aware that the erection of the St. Mary's Catholic school, Bolton, was sanctioned at a time when the provisions of the Act were understood to throw upon the local authority, in all cases, the duty of providing the furniture for a new voluntary school. The Board have, however, recently been advised that, under a correct construction of the terms of the Act, no such obligation rests upon the local authority, and that the authority can properly decline to maintain a new voluntary school unless and until it is provided with the requisite furniture, etc., for the purposes of a public elementary school. I am, however, of opinion that, in cases where the provision of the school was settled at a time when the reverse view was held, it would be a fair arrangement if the local authority were to arrange that the cost of providing the furniture etc., should not, contrary to expectation, fall upon the managers. But whether this can be avoided, where an authority is willing to bear the expense as it has expected to have to do, raises difficult legal questions which are being carefully considered.

Report of the Mansfield Commission.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state briefly what recommendations contained in the Report of the Mansfield Commission he proposed to apply to the Island of Lewis and the Western Highlands.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The present arrangements, which are based on the Report, are experimental, and it is not intended to add to them at present.

Condition of Third-class Carriages on the Loughrea and Attymon Railway.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the use in passenger trains on the Loughrea and Attymon Railway, county Galway, of third-class carriages so rough and coarse as to be obviously out of date, and whether, seeing that the residents living alongside the line and the ratepayers are subject to a baronial guarantee for the payment to the shareholders of 5 per cent., he can exercise any power to induce the directors to improve the carriages with a view to the comfort of the travelling public.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My attention had not previously been called to this matter; but I have forwarded a copy of the hon. Member's Question to the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Company, who inform me that they work the line referred to with precisely the same class of rolling stock as that in use all over their system. The company add that their third-class carriages have been improved since the date when the line was opened and the baronial guarantee to the Loughrea and Attymon Company came into force.

Sale of Warships at Chatham.

Mr. STEPHEN COLLINGS (Lambeth, Kennington): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state with reference to the eleven warships reported to have been sold at Chatham on 3rd April last, the original cost of each ship and when it was launched; when it was last repaired, and how much has been spent in repairs in each case, and the price for which each ship was sold.

(Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.) The information asked for is as follows:

Name of vessel.	First cost.	When launched.	Last substantial repair.		Amount realised by sale.
			Date.	Amount.	
	£			£	£
Cockatrice - -	51,006	1886	—	1,708 (b)	3,800
Drake - -	22,991	1875	1893–4	911	1,400
Hyæna - -	11,032	1873	1899–00 to 1900–01	3,984	850
Melampus - -	32,109	1820	—	16 (b)	1,650
Mercury - -	No record	1826	—	96 (b)	1,375
Mildura - -	117,466	1889	1903–4	9,267	7,200
Pylades . -	102,490	1884	1898–9	15,336	5,900
Seamew - -	9,900	(a)	—	553 (b)	1,300
Sheerness - -	8,745	1859	—	446 (b)	1,150
Tartar - -	88,912	1886	1902–3 to 1903–4	19,564	5,450
Torpedo Boat No. 4 - - -	8,584	1879	—	170 (b)	205
Wye - - -	21,500	1873	—	2,195 (b)	2,800
Undine - -	11,653	1884	—	877 (b)	1,500

(a) Transferred from Inland Revenue Department in 1857.

(b) Average annual expenditure for repairs, the vessel not having undergone a large refit.

Vivisection.

Mr. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any announcement to make as to the nature of an inquiry into the subject of vivisection, and as to the date on which it may be expected.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.) I am not yet in a position to make any announcement as to the nature and date

of inquiry, but I hope to be able to do so soon after the Easter recess.

Workmen's Compensation—Application to Municipal Employees—Trained Asylum Nurses.

Mr. MICKLEM (Hertfordshire, Watford): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Workmen's Compensation Bill will apply to municipal employees, and whether including male and female trained nurses in the asylums for mental diseases.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Answer is in the affirmative.

Reports on Piecework Trades.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he includes among inquiries now proceeding as to the extension of particulars to certain piecework trades some, such as brush-making, india-rubber balloon-making, and net-making, which were mentioned in His Majesty's Chief Inspector's Report for 1902 as already or about to be specially reported on with a view to their inclusion in the protection of the particulars sections; and whether, these Reports having been submitted four years ago, he can see his way to extending the particulars sections to these industries at once.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) No further Reports have been submitted with reference to these three industries, beyond a reference to net-making in the Principal Lady Inspector's Report for 1903. Brush-making is now the subject of an inquiry, and I will call for Reports also with regard to the other two.

Lymph used by Public Vaccinators.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the lymph which has been or is now being issued by the vaccination authorities is entirely innocent of any culture by small-pox.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The lymph used by public vaccinators is, I believe, almost entirely that which is issued gratuitously by the National Vaccine Establishment, and with respect to this I may refer to the Answer I gave to my hon. friend on March 23rd.† I cannot speak positively as to the source of any lymph used by a public vaccinator which he has obtained elsewhere, but The Vaccination Act, 1898, requires that it shall be glycerinated lymph derived from the calf.

Erection of a Small-pox Hospital at Bournemouth.

Mr. LYELL (Dorset, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the proposal of the Bournemouth Corporation to erect a small-pox hospital at Ferndown, in the county of Dorset; whether he is aware that the site for the hospital is closely adjacent to a number of small residential properties, and that the close proximity of the proposed hospital will ruin the neighbourhood as building land, to which it is admirably suited; whether, seeing that there is a quantity of vacant heath-land available in the county of Hampshire, to which Bournemouth belongs, he will say whether there is any precedent for an urban authority building such a hospital in a neighbouring county, in the teeth of the protests both of the inhabitants of the district affected and the local authorities of the county concerned; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware that the corporation have purchased some twenty-four acres of land at Ferndown, for the erection of a building for the reception of small-pox cases, should any occur in the borough. I understand that the building will only consist of a pavilion of a temporary character, capable of accommodating about eight patients, and that it will be from 300 to 350 yards distant from the nearest dwelling-house, and about half a mile from the village of Ferndown. The land, which is freehold, has been purchased for £750, and it is suggested that this fact indicates that there is not much demand for land for building or any other purpose in the neighbourhood. There are, I believe, precedents for the town council of a county borough building a hospital in the adjoining county, notwithstanding opposition of the kind referred to. I have ascertained that the Corporation of Bournemouth do not propose to defray the cost of the site or of the building by means of borrowed money, and, in these circumstances, I have no authority to interfere in the matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 742.

Lord De Ramsay and his Tenants.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the statement that Lord de Ramsey has given notice to 1,000 allotment and small holders of land in the county of Huntingdon to quit their occupations in October; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made, and also put himself in communication with the local authorities with a view to their providing allotments for this large body of agricultural labourers.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I have not at present received any representation on this subject. I think the best course will be for the present holders of the allotments to place themselves at once in communication with the local authorities. If any action on my part is necessary, and application is made to me on the subject, I will give the matter immediate consideration.

Revision of the County of Dublin Ordnance Survey Maps.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin Co., S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the revision of Ordnance Survey maps of the county of Dublin will not in future include, at the public cost, the revision of any plans on a scale larger than that of 25·344 inches to the mile, unless part of the cost is borne by the ratepayers; whether he is aware that Ordnance Survey maps of the city of London are drawn to a scale of ten feet to the mile, at the public expense; and whether, under these circumstances, he will take steps to insure the revision of the 1·1056 scales of the county of Dublin, at the public cost, as has hitherto been the practice.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It was decided by the Treasury in 1894 that the revision of Ordnance Survey plans on a larger scale than twenty-five inches to the mile should not in future be undertaken unless the local authority agree to pay the extra cost involved. This rule has been uniformly enforced since that year, and I regret that it is not in the power of the board to make any exception in favour of the county of Dublin. The revision of the large scale plans of the city of London was carried out before 1894.

Imperial Finance.

MR. HAROLD COX: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what were the aggregate gross liabilities of the State on 31st March last.

MR. HAROLD COX: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the total sum estimated to be raised by loan in the current financial year for civil, military, and naval works.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I would ask my hon. friend to wait until my Budget statement for these figures, as I think their publication before that date is attended with some inconvenience.

Director of Public Instruction in Bengal.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that two independent unofficial bodies, viz., the heads of sixteen Calcutta colleges, and the Anglo-Indian Defence Association, memorialised the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal last autumn against the proposed appointment of a member of the Indian Civil Service as the next Director of Public Instruction in Bengal, and will he say whether any answer had been vouchsafed to their representations; is he aware that the members of the Indian Educational Service in Bengal had individually memorialised the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in August and September, 1905, on the same subject, and will he say whether they had received any reply; and, if so, at what date, or, if not, will he explain why; and whether, seeing that there is a Government rule in force in India to the effect that no Government servant may memorialise the Secretary of State for India until he has presented his case and received an answer from the Government of India, he will say whether the members of the Educational Service have been effectually debarred by this delay of more than six months from presenting a petition to the Secretary of State against the passing over of all the members of their service in favour of an outsider for an appointment which had hitherto always been held by an education officer.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have no information as to the statements in the Question. The hon. Member is no doubt aware that the reasons for the temporary appointment of Mr. Earle have been fully explained in the replies given to Questions on the subject by my predecessor on the 2nd and 10th August and by myself on the 1st March last,† that the Lieutenant-Governor, in the exercise of his discretion, has acted in what he believes to be the interest of the public service, and that the arrangements which have been made are not contrary to the practice prevailing in other provinces of India, and are on this occasion deemed essential for the advantage of the Department.

County Councils and the Insurance Clauses of the Marine Works Act.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is possible for county councils of counties outside the congested districts to take advantage of the insurance clauses of the Marine Works Act; and, if so, if he will state what procedure has to be followed for the purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Under Section 11 of The Marine Works Act, 1902, a county council and the Board of Works may agree that any marine work, which is the public property of the county, shall be vested in the Board of Works, and shall be inspected, maintained, and kept in repair by that board out of the general maintenance fund under the Act. The section further provides that the county council shall covenant to pay such annual sum as the Lord-Lieutenant may certify to be properly payable by the council as a county contribution in respect of the work, and it is provided by Section 2 that such contribution shall not be less than 1½ per cent. of the total cost of the work. In order to take advantage of these provisions, it would be necessary that a county council should pass a Resolution to the effect that they are desirous of applying the provisions of Section 11 in the case in question; that they are willing to pay the Board of Works such annual sum as the Lord-Lieutenant may certify; that they request the Lord-Lieutenant to fix the sum, and request the Local Government Board to consent to the alienation of the work, and request the Board of Works to take over the work. It would then be for the Board of Works to decide whether it is necessary, in the public interest, that they should enter into an agreement under Section 11, and if they should so decide, a conveyance would be entered into, and other legal steps taken.

Building Grants to Irish Schools.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the minutes of the Committee of Council of Education in Scotland, dated the 19th of March, 1906, in which provision is made for a special grant of £1,500 towards the cost of new school buildings, or of the repair and upkeep of existing buildings in the Highlands and Islands; and whether a similar special provision will be made in the case of new schools in the congested districts of Ireland.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cli., 79, 945; clii., 1301.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the provision referred to in the Question has in fact been made, and the necessity is fully recognised of making provision for the improvement of school buildings in the congested districts in Ireland. The matter is being fully considered. I may remind the hon. Member that £35,000 is this year to be expended out of money provided by Parliament on new school buildings in Ireland, and the poorest districts will of course have a strong claim for the improvement of their school buildings.

Roads (County Kerry) Boat Slip.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the slip at Roads, county Kerry, is rendered practically useless through the partly submerged ledge of rock which prevents the boats reaching the landing-place; and whether the Congested Districts Board will instruct their engineer to have the ledge blasted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) In the opinion of the Congested Districts Board, it is not the fact that the landing place at Roads is practically useless. The board have made improvements to the landing place, as a result of which large seine boats are now used by the fishermen instead of the canoes formerly used. It is considered that no reasonable expenditure would make such an exposed landing place completely satisfactory, but the board's engineer will make a further inspection, and report whether anything can be done as regards the ledge of rock mentioned.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants—Application of Mrs. Daniel Coffey and Daniel McCarthy.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the claim of Mrs. Daniel Coffey, of Gurtcullinane, Beaufort, for reinstatement in the farm from which her late husband was evicted in 1885, on the J. Mahony estate, Dunloe, county Kerry; and whether, seeing that the negotiations for the sale of the estate have not yet been concluded, they will settle this matter satisfactorily to all parties concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have made inquiries into this case and have ascertained that Daniel and John Coffey, who were brothers, were joint tenants of the holding in question. Both were evicted, and John Coffey subsequently became tenant of the entire holding, which he has now agreed to purchase under the Land Purchase Acts. It appears to the Commissioners that they cannot interfere in the matter, which is really in the nature of a family dispute.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the application for reinstatement has been received by the Estates Commissioners from Daniel M'Carthy, representative of the late Patrick M'Carthy, an evicted tenant on the Trinity College estate at Fustane, Kenmare; and whether, seeing that negotiations for the sale of the estate are now in progress, this application will be duly attended to.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have no record of the receipt of an application for reinstatement in the case referred to.

Sale of the O'Donel Estate, County Mayo.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the dates within the last ten years on which the O'Donel estate, situate at Newport, county Mayo, has come before the Court of Chancery for sale; who were the intending purchasers on each occasion; why did not the sale come off; and can he give the name or names of the objectors to the sale on each occasion.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the registrar of the Land Judge's Court that the estate in question has not at any time been publicly offered for sale. The learned Judge has, however, directed that the estate be offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board, and the schedule of tenancies and other necessary matters are in course of settlement.

Gun Licence for Mr. John Murphy of Derrybrick, Castlebar.

Dr. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give any reason why Mr. John Murphy, of Derrybrick, Ludlough, Castlebar, county Mayo, should not be allowed a gun licence for the purpose of protecting his crops from vermin.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The power of issuing a licence under the Peace Preservation Act is vested in the resident magistrate of the district. It would be contrary to practice to state the grounds upon which the magistrate, in the exercise of his discretion, has so far refused to grant a licence.

Compulsion of Tenants to Sign Purchase Agreements on the Fraser Estate, County Cork.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received a memorial from Mrs. Catherine O'Brien, a tenant on the Fraser estate, county Cork, setting forth the means employed by the owner and his agent to induce and compel the tenants to sign purchase agreements, and if a resolution to the same effect, adopted by the Mitchelstown No. 1 District Council, has also reached the Commission; and whether, in view of these allegations, full investigation will be made into all the circumstances before any advances for purchase of this estate are sanctioned.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received the memorial and resolution mentioned, and will, when dealing with the estate, give due consideration to the allegations made in these documents.

Fair Rent Appeals in Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can by any means expedite proceedings in the Land Commissioners' Court in Limerick, to have fair rents fixed in the cases of farms as between landlords and tenants by the Sub-Commissioners, and to have appeals heard on similar issues in the High Commissioner's Court, in view of the arrears under both Commissions.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission inform me that a Sub-

Commission Court has been almost continually employed in the county Limerick for some years, and a list containing cases from the union of Limerick and Croom is at present in course of disposal, while another list, containing cases from other parts of the county, is in course of preparation. The Appeal Court sat in Limerick in October last, and will sit there again on the 28th June. In fixing the sittings of the Sub-Commission and the Appeal Courts the Land Commission are obliged to have due regard to the claims of the different districts as well as to the time at the disposal of these courts.

Sale of the Marshall Estate, Doon, County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, can he say if he knows anything about the negotiations for sale and purchase as between the landlords, without regard of the nominal owner, Mr. Marshall, and the tenants on the Marshall estate, Toomaline, Doon, county Limerick; and, inasmuch as under duress and pressure of arrears on this rack-rented property the majority of the tenants have consented to purchase, whilst four have declined to purchase between the Toomaline, Kilmoylan, and Moanoola sections of the estate, will the Estates Commissioners declare this estate not to be one for sale under the Land Purchase Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have no knowledge of any negotiation which may be in progress for the sale of this estate.

Sale of Major Newenham's Estate at Toryhill, County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, is he aware that negotiations for sale and purchase have been for some time going on between Major Newenham and his tenants on his estate at Toryhill, Croom, county Limerick; and that, owing to the pressure of arrears on this rack-rented property, the majority have consented to purchase on terms on which the minority, who are in a position to resist pressure in purchasing, have refused to become purchasers; and will he recommend the Estates Commissioners to exercise their discretion of declaring the lands in question not to be an estate for sale under the provisions of the Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have directed their inspector to report upon this estate, and when the Report has been received they will consider the matters referred to in the Question.

Jamaica Garrison.

Mr. HAROLD COX: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided to retain British troops in the Island of Jamaica; what will be the composition and the strength of this force; what will be its estimated annual cost; and by whom will that cost be borne.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The garrison for which provision is made in Estimates 1906–7 is 1,790 all ranks, of whom about 350 are Europeans. The estimated cost of this force is about £136,000, and it is borne by Army Votes. Some reduction o the non-European troops, West India Regiment, is, however, in contemplation.

Firing on Dartmoor on Bank Holidays.

Mr. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the convenience to the general public, he would take steps to inquire whether there could be no firing on Dartmoor on Easter Monday and on Whit Monday.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Instructions have been issued to the commandant of the practice camp at Okehampton that there is to be no firing on either Easter Monday or Whit Monday.

Suggested Weekly Payment of Army Pensions.

Sir SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the present system of paying Army pensions quarterly or monthly is a direct cause of thriftlessness, and an indirect cause of pauperism among ex-soldiers; and whether he can arrange for such pensions to be paid weekly through the Post Office or in any other manner.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The whole question of the mode of payment of Army pensions is now receiving my most careful consideration; but I am not at present in a position to make any statement.

Report of Committee on Employment of ex-Soldiers and ex-Sailors.

Sir SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will lay the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Employment of ex-Soldiers and ex-Sailors, together with the evidence, upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is not usual to lay Departmental Reports, and, as this Report has not yet been made, I am not at present in a position to give a reply to the Question.

Scottish Statute Law Revision.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in the event of the Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Bill being read a second time, what course the Government will take with reference to the commitment of the measure.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I refer my hon. friend to my Answer given to-day to my hon. friend the Member for Aberdeen.† The Statute Law Revision Bill seems to me just such a measure as might well be remitted to a Scottish Grand Committee.

The Hague Peace Conference.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any date is fixed for the meeting of the Second International Peace Conference at The Hague; and if he can tell the House the names of the British delegates.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The second half of July has been proposed by the Russian Government for the meeting of the Second Peace Conference at The Hague. The appointments of the British delegates are not yet settled, but the matter is under consideration.

Mr. BYLES: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, among the subjects to be submitted to the next Hague Conference, he can give an assurance that an international arrest of armaments will be included; if not, will His Majesty's Government propose the inclusion of that subject; and will the House be given an early opportunity of discussing the whole matter.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I cannot say whether it would be practicable to make specific proposals with regard to a limitation of armaments, but the matter is one which His Majesty's Government regard with most sympathetic interest.

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† See col. 1013.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Repatriation of the Chinese Coolies.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) On behalf of the hon. Member for Down, West, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the offer of His Majesty's Government to repatriate the Chinese coolies employed in the Transvaal Colony, under the Chinese Labour Ordinance, at the expense of the Imperial Exchequer, has been communicated to the coolies; if so, when was the communication made: and if the Colonial Office has received any; and, if so, how many acceptances from the coolies of the offer of His Majesty's Government to secure their free passages to their homes in China.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): I have as yet nothing to add to the Answer given to the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs on Monday last,† the full text of which has been published. Lord Selborne has not yet completed the drafting of the actual regulations which are to give effect to his proposals. We are expecting to receive these from him from day to day, and the Secretary of State is satisfied that no time will be lost in settling this complicated matter in strict accordance with the pledges given to Parliament.

Martial Law.

Mr. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether martial law can be proclaimed in a Colony where a state of war does not exist, and without the consent of the Home Government; and, if a state of war does exist, is it in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Geneva Convention to shoot prisoners taken in such war.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The reply to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, I presume that the hon. Member refers not to the Geneva Convention, which deals with the treatment of wounded, but to the Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War by Land. This Convention is not binding when a non contracting Power is one of the belligerents. But, in any case, I am not aware that anything has been done by the Natal forces inconsistent with that and other Conventions of like nature. I would refer the hon. Member to page 28 of Cd. 1423, where the following words occur: — "Martial Law is called into being by a proclamation issued by the Governor, acting under the advice of his Ministers. It is an announcement to the public that the provisions of the civil law are inadequate to deal with the situation which has arisen, and an intimation to the military authorities that the Government is willing that exceptional measures should be taken by those authorities to meet circumstances with which the ordinary law is unable sufficiently to cope, and to enable persons resisting the authority of the Government, or aiding or abetting the enemy, to be arrested summarily and punished promptly. In proclaiming martial law the Government, in fact, declares itself obliged, for the protection of the community, temporarily to neglect the law, trusting to the Legislature to relieve from their liability for the consequences all those who, in obedience to the constituted authority, may have acted unlawfully in defence of the public safety." The hon. Member will perceive that neither a state of war, nor the consent of the Home Government is required for the proclamation of martial law.

Mr. MYER: Is it not the rule to suspend the civil Courts during the time martial law is in existence?

Mr. CHURCHILL said the civil Courts were only suspended during the existence of martial law in so far as the Government might consider it necessary in order to apply the provisions of martial law. As a matter of fact, the civil Courts were working at this moment.

Ceylon Pearl Fisheries.

Sir J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any sort of publicity or advertisement to capitalists was given of the intention to lease the

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 162, 163.

Ceylon Government pearl fisheries; what are the names and standing of the syndicate who negotiated with Mr. Lyttelton for the lease for twenty years; and whether it was in accordance with the practice of the Colonial Office to grant a concession of this kind without inviting tenders or competition among capitalists in the United Kingdom, India, or Ceylon.

Mr. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): At the same time, may I ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the names of the persons composing the syndicate to which the Ceylon pearl fisheries have been leased for twenty years, and with whom the negotiations were conducted at the Colonial Office; and why the lease was entered into without notice to other capitalists who might, in open competition, have offered the Government more favourable terms.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The following are some of the principal members of the syndicate:—The Exploration (Rothschilds) Company, Messrs. Neuman and Co., Sir West Ridgeway, Messrs. Friedlander, Messrs. Derenburg and Co., Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton, Lord Arthur Butler, Sir J. Bonser, Sir Stanley Blois. The full list can be seen at Somerset House. The negotiations were conducted with Messrs. Derenburg. The intention to lease the pearl fisheries was not advertised, and presumably the late Government, by whom this arrangement was contracted, did not consider that the contract was a suitable one for throwing open to public tender. With regard to the last part of the hon. Member's Question, the Secretary of State desires me to say that concessions involving the consideration of many intricate details, and in regard to which the financial standing and resources of the concessionnaires are of the utmost importance, are not always to be regarded as transactions which can advantageously be dealt with by advertisement and competition.

Mr. COWAN asked why the lease was not thrown open to public tender.

*Mr. CHURCHILL presumed that the arguments were carefully considered by Mr. Lyttelton and his advisers at the time, and they decided that the offer which was made to them by those particular firms was one which ought to be accepted on its merits, and not exposed to the competition of other offers. He would communicate with the Secretary of State as to the possibility of laying Papers on the Table.

Indian Army Reorganisation.

Colonel HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any orders have been issued in India with a view to carrying into effect the scheme of reorganisation of the War Department, as sketched in the minute by Lord Kitchener, dated January 1st, 1905; and whether he will communicate all such orders to the House, and when such communication may be expected.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. John Morley, Montrose Burghs): The scheme sketched by Lord Kitchener in his Minute of January 1st, 1905, has not been adopted. The reforms in military administration which have been actually sanctioned will be found in the Papers already issued to Parliament. The orders therein contained are now being acted on in India.

Income-Tax.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can now state what steps the Government propose to take with reference to the inquiry into the question of the graduation and differentiation of the income-tax.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): I shall make an announcement on the subject of the proposed inquiry in my financial statement.

Mr. BRANCH (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his intention to introduce legislation to give effect to the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Income-Tax [Cd. 2575] that the grant of exemption or abatement by reason of smallness of income should be abolished in the case of persons resident outside the United Kingdom.

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not propose to take any steps upon the Committee's Report until the further inquiry into questions connected with the income-tax which has been promised has taken place.

Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the inconvenience caused to friendly societies by the deduction of income-tax when such bodies are drawing interest upon investments; and, as registered friendly societies are exempt from income-tax, can he arrange so as to obviate the necessity for such deductions being made and the process involved in recovering the same.

Mr. ASQUITH: I fear it would not be possible to make any such arrangement as is suggested, consistently with the maintenance of the system of collection of income-tax at the source.

The Case of Hugh Watt.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a sworn statement by Alfred Dixon Brown, formerly a prisoner at Wormwood Scrubbs, in reference to a confession alleged to have been made to him by a convict named Lightfoot, regarding the character of the evidence given by him, and the circumstances under which it came to be given, in the recent case of Rex v. Hugh Watt; whether he is taking steps to test the veracity of the statement; whether, if such statement be proved to be correct, he will reconsider the question of advising a modification in the sentence passed upon Hugh Watt at the said trial; and whether the Government will consent to the introduction of a clause in the Criminal Appeal Bill, making the same retrospective in its character, in order that the case of Rex v. Watt may be reviewed by the Court of Criminal Appeal.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The statutory declaration referred to has been submitted to me, but I find on inquiry that such of the statements attributed to Lightfoot as can be tested are false and that no credit can be given to any of them. I am not prepared to advise any exercise of the Royal Prerogative in favour of Hugh Watt, and I cannot here discuss the provisions of a Bill now under the consideration of the other House.

Case of Mr. Harold Nisbet Price.

Mr. RADFORD (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it has now come to his knowledge that the Commissioner of Police is convinced that a mistake in the case of the arrest and charge of Mr. Harold Nisbet Price was made by the constables, and that he is now satisfied that Mr. Price was innocent of the charge preferred against him, and that the evidence given by Mr. Price at the police court was the true version of the facts; and whether the officer in charge of the Upper Street police station on the 11th February has been punished for his action in the matter.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes. The inquiries made by the police have clearly established the fact that Mr. Price was innocent and that the officer who arrested him, though he acted in perfect good faith, was mistaken. The officer in charge of the station, who was guilty of a grave error of judgment in detaining him until he produced sureties instead of releasing him at once on personal recognisance, has been punished by the Commissioner.

Fishermen and the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Mr. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is proposed that fishermen engaged for a season's fishing, and who are paid no wages, but are remunerated by the allocation to them of a share of the gross proceeds of the fish sold, shall be workmen within the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Bill.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: The mere fact that a fisherman is paid by a share of the gross proceeds of the fish sold, is not inconsistent with the existence of a contract of service between him and the person by whom he is engaged, and the fishermen in such a case might be a workman within the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Bill; but it would be otherwise if this mode of payment were accompanied by terms showing that the relation was in substance one of partnership rather than one of service. The circumstances in each case would have to be considered, and the facts suggested in the Question are not sufficient to enable an opinion to be formed, which would be applicable to all cases where this mode of payment is adopted.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is proposed that fishermen engaged for a season's fishing, and who are paid no wages, and contribute to the purpose of the adventure by providing nets or by bearing part of the expense of outfit or stores of the boat, and are remunerated by a share of the net proceeds of the fish sold, after deduction of the cost of stores and other expenses, shall be workmen within the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Bill.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The terms of agreement stated in this Question give rise to a strong presumption of partnership. The fishermen in the case here supposed, contributes to the capital, and is paid by a share of the nett instead of the gross profits. There are terms and conditions other than the mode of payment which might have to be taken into consideration (*e.g.*, the control of the adventure), but if regard be had only to the facts suggested in the Question, the fishermen would be a partner, and not a workman within the meaning of the Bill.

Police Holidays.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he would consider the possibility, in the case of the Metropolitan Police, of applying the same arrangements which obtain for the provision of a yearly holiday of two weeks (namely, a slight extension of the area of the beat for the men on duty) to the question of giving each man one day off in seven, thus conferring an immense boon without any additional expense.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I should be very glad if it were possible to adopt my hon. friend's suggestion but I am afraid the difficulties at present are too great. In many instances the area of the beat is already too large, and I agree with the Commissioner of Police, whom I have consulted, in thinking that a further extension cannot safely be made.

Metropolitan Police Accounts.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will make arrangements for the accounts of the Metropolitan Police and Police Pensions Funds for the year ended March 31st, 1906, to be presented pursuant to Act 30 and 31 Vic., c. 39, to contain the outstanding debtors and creditors at March 31st last on the ordinary police establishment and police pension funds, in addition to the balance account submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid that I cannot undertake to do this; it would not be possible before the 30th instant (the latest date allowed by statute for the presentation of the Metropolitan Police accounts) to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the amounts due to the various contractors and other persons for goods supplied and work done up to March 31st. I may, however, state that every effort is invariably made to secure that, as far as possible, all payments properly chargeable against the year's income shall be made within the financial year, and that all income receivable shall be collected and brought to account within the year.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will lay before both Houses of Parliament copies of the annual estimates of expenditure and income relating to the Metropolitan Police and Police Pension Funds in respect of the financial years ended on March 31st, 1905 and 1906 respectively, compiled for the information of the Home Office by the receiver for the Metropolitan Police district.

*MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. An annual statement of the accounts of the Metropolitan Police Fund is laid before Parliament on April 30th and the audited account of the Fund is included in the volume of Appropriation Accounts. I do not think any useful purpose would be served by presenting the Departmental Papers to which the hon. Member refers.

Metropolitan Police Rate Warrants.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill at an early date to amend the provisions of the 29th Section of the Act 10 George 4, cap. 44, to enable the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police to levy the half-yearly rate warrants upon the councils of metropolitan boroughs and other places liable to the Metropolitan Police rate on April 6th and October 1st in each financial year, beginning with April 6th, 1907, instead of on the dates fixed at present for the issue of the warrants, viz., July 1st and January 1st, respectively.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The Question raised by the hon. Member was considered by my predecessor in office, who came to the conclusion that there was no sufficient reason for altering the existing procedure in regard to the police rate warrants. I will look into it myself, as desired by the hon. Member; but I would point out to him that if the dates were altered as suggested it would be necessary either to levy on July 1st, 1906, a rate sufficient to provide for nine month's expenditure or to levy on January 1st, 1907, a rate to provide for three months.

Vaccination Certificates.

MR. H. R. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the attitude adopted by certain justices towards applicants for vaccination certificates, he will consider the desirability of introducing legislation which shall specify the questions which justices shall put to such applicants.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I will take note of the suggestion of my hon. friend; but I doubt whether the method which he proposes would afford the best way of meeting the object which he has in view.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): Is it not the case that when the Act of 1898 was under consideration the then Government assured this House that no inquiry by magistrates as to the validity of the grounds of objection would be possible?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I believe that is the case.

Lord de Ramsay's Huntingdon Estate.

MR. PARKER (Halifax): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the notice given by Lord de Ramsay, to 1,072 allotment holders on his Huntingdon estate, that he is prepared to assist the local authority in taking over the land at present held by them; whether he has received any application from the local authorities of the district; and whether, as the notices terminating the present arrangement expire on October 12th next, he will endeavour to facilitate the application of the local authorities so as to secure to these tenants continuity of their tenure.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have not received any application from the local authorities referred to with respect to this matter, nor has my attention been called to it. If any such application is made I will give it immediate and sympathetic consideration.

Royal Commission on Poor Law Administration.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the importance of its deliberations to many subjects of discussion, he will make representations urging the Royal Commission on Poor Law Administration to issue interim reports or interim volumes of evidence; and if he can say at what date approximately the House will be in possession of such first report or volume of evidence.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have communicated with the Chairman of the Royal Commission on this subject, and learn from him that the Commission would gladly make any interim reports which would be of use in themselves and at the same time would not prejudge the general questions refered to them. Whether it will be practicable for them to make any such reports the Chairman is at present unable to say. He doubts the expediency of publishing evidence which is incomplete and might therefore be misleading.

Railway Clearing House Extensions.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Railway Clearing House authorities have rehoused any of the persons that have been displaced by the gradual extension of their premises in Seymour Street, St. Pancras; and whether, in case of any further extension of their premises in this neighbourhood, they or the railway companies who control them will be required to rehouse the persons they may displace.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I find that in the year 1874 the Clearing House acquired under an Act of Parliament thirty-seven houses in this neighbourhood, and have at various times demolished them and built offices on the sites. I understand that in each case full notice was given to the tenants and suitable compensation made. The Act of 1874 contained no provision for rehousing, and the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1903, does not apply. I understand that the need for any further extension of the Clearing House is extremely remote. If application were made to Parliament for power to acquire additional property, the requirements of the Act of 1903 would of course have to be complied with.

Poor Law Settlements.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the present position as to settlements of poor persons in parishes divided under the operation of Sections 1 (3), 36 (1), or 36 (2) of The Local Government Act, 1894; and whether he will propose some remedy to meet the cases in which persons have lost their settlement by reason of the division of the parish in which they were born or have derived a settlement.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware that it has been decided by the High Court that if a parish was formed into two or more separate parishes by operation of the Local Government Act, 1894, persons who had a settlement in the original parish lost it, and did not acquire a settlement in any of the new parishes. I have no power to remedy this result, which can only have a temporary effect, and I could not promise to propose legislation on the subject. Where parishes have been altered or abolished by means of orders of the councils of counties or county boroughs, the Local Government Board have taken care to see that provision was made, either by the original order or by the order confirming it, to prevent any difficulty in this matter. They have also inserted provisions on the subject in any orders made by themselves whereby parishes have been altered or abolished.

The Distress Committees.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the suggestions made by the Nottingham and Swansea Distress Committee that the Committees should suspend operations during the summer months, mainly owing to lack of funds; whether it is competent for a distress committee to suspend operations; and whether it is intended to so amend the Unemployed Workmen's Act this session as to enable distress committees to obtain funds either from the National Exchequer or the local rates for carrying on labour farms and other undertakings on which the able-bodied unemployed may be set to work.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have not received any communication on this subject from the distress committees referred to. It is within their competence to determine from time to time whether applications should be received by them from unemployed persons for assistance under the Act. I am afraid I cannot give any intimation as to what may be proposed in the Bill which the Government have stated they propose to introduce for the Amendment of the Act.

Metropolitan Water Board Accounts.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board the date when the second audit of the accounts of the Metropolitan Water Board for the year ended March 31st, 1905, was commenced, and the probable date when the statutory financial statement will be signed.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Practically the audit has been going on since September, 1904, but in December last the books were made up in a complete form, and the audit was formally opened on the 4th of that month. The work of the audit is now finished, and the financial statement will be signed very shortly.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if any steps have been taken by the Board, and the nature of them, to issue a form of accounts, with exemplifications, for the keeping of the accounts of the Metropolitan Water Board and its officers since the Metropolis Water Act, 1902, came into operation.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Since the transfer to the Metropolitan Water Board of the undertakings of the water companies in June, 1904, the District Auditor has been in frequent consultation with the officers of the Water Board as to the systems and forms which should be adopted for the various branches of the accounts. The Local Government Board have instructed him to make a special Report to them with respect to the general system of the accounts kept, and particularly as regards the accounts relating to the collection of the water rates. The Auditor states that there is no urgent need for regulations as to the form of accounts, and that it would be better not to issue them until after the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Accounts of Local Authorities has been received and considered.

Marconi's Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will lay a copy of the contract between the Postmaster-General and the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company upon the Table.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I will lay the contract on the Table.

Members' Correspondence.

MR. MACPHERSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the advisability of allowing Members of Parliament to frank up to twenty-five letters a day, such letters to be handed in at the Lobby Post Office.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am afraid I do not see my way to support the suggestion of the hon. Member.

National and Tate Galleries.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he could see his way to altering the arrangements for opening the National Gallery and Tate Gallery so that they may be open for a full day on Sunday, and from two o'clock onwards on Monday, or some other weekday which is not a general holiday.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): An entirely different staff is employed on Sundays in the galleries so that the proposed change would involve a large increase of expenditure. In any case, however, a proposal to open the galleries during the morning hours on Sunday would not, I think, be in accordance with the wishes of the public generally.

Zoological Gardens.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any grant, advantage, or privilege is extended by the Government to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park; if so, what is the nature of such grant, advantage, or privilege; and whether, in return for this, he can arrange that the public shall be allowed free admission to these gardens on one or more specified days in each week.

MR. McKENNA: The Zoological Society hold their land in Regent's Park on an annual tenancy from the Commissioners of Woods. Beyond this they receive no grant, advantage, or privilege, so far as I am aware, from public sources. In the circumstances I do not see any ground on which I could press the Society to admit the public to the gardens free of charge.

SIR W. J. COLLINS: What rent is paid by the Society?

MR McKENNA: Something like £300 a year I think, but I am not sure.

St. Pancras Schools.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if his attention has been called to the number of public elementary schools in St. Pancras which are seriously overcrowded; is he aware that several of the non-provided schools in the borough have been condemned as being unsuitable, from the point of view of structure, for the purposes of elementary education; that some of these schools have already been closed, the children who attended them being distributed amongst the other schools in the vicinity; and whether, in view of the arrears to make up in building in St. Pancras before the present requirements are met, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): My attention has been called to the facts mentioned in the Question. The Board of Education have informed the London County Council that they cannot sanction, for anything more than a strictly temporary purpose, the arrangements adopted by them for accommodating the displaced children in Council schools in which there is not adequate room for them. In some cases, I understand, the central halls have to be used as classrooms in order to meet the influx of children. The Board understand that the County Council are hastening as far as possible the provision of proper accommodation to meet the existing deficiency, and that the arrangements which have been criticised are in fact strictly temporary and will be replaced very shortly by proper provision.

Adulteration of Butter.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board is aware that a food exhibition is about to be held in the Crystal Palace; and whether, with a view to the enlightenment of the people of this country, in regard to the extensive practice of food adulteration, the Board will arrange to send to that exhibition samples of milk-blended butter, cocoa-nut fat, lardine, and other foreign fats now used in adulterating butter, cotton seed searin used in the manufacture of margarine, special machines from Holland for butter faking, and other articles the use of and employment of which is now known to Professor Thorpe and other highly-placed officials of the Board of Agriculture.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I have no doubt that an exhibition of the articles used in the adulteration of butter would be both interesting and instructive, but I am afraid that we must leave the matter to private enterprise.

Seed Testing.

SIR J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any steps have been taken for the establishment of an agricultural seed-testing station, as recommended by a Departmental Committee of the Board of Agriculture about five years ago.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: No steps have yet been taken for the establishment of a Government seed-testing station, but the Aynsome Agricultural Station in Lancashire and most of the agricultural colleges undertake the work, and I doubt whether any further action on the part of the Government is needed. I may remind my hon. friend that two members of the Committee were of opinion that the case for a central seed-testing station under Government auspices was not a strong one.

Sanitary Condition of the Lews.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Dr. Dittmar, in his Report on the sanitary condition of the Lews, directs attention to the fact that the township of Lurebost, consisting of 125 houses, is built on the side of a hill below the road in such a manner that the houses receive all the surface drainage from the road; and, in view of the fact that there are suitable sites on the upper side of the road, will he state whether the Local Government Board for Scotland have taken any steps to enforce the Public Health (Scotland) Acts in this township.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The whole subject of the insanitary conditions prevailing in parts of the Lews is engaging my anxious consideration; the position of the local authority is one of great difficulty, as indicated by the facts mentioned by the hon. Member; the subject involves consideration of general policy, and every effort is being made to hasten the time when some announcement can be made.

[The following Questions which also appeared on the Paper were covered by the foregoing Answer:—

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the local authorities in the island of Lewis are unable to give effect to the provisions of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, or take such action as may be necessary to remedy the insanitary state of the townships as disclosed in Dr. Dittmar's Report, will he say whether the Local Government Board for Scotland have yet considered the expediency of meeting the difficulty by taking over the public health administration of the island.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the local authorities in the island of Lewis state that, in endeavouring to carry into effect the Public Health Acts, they have imposed a maximum rate of 1s. per £, fixed by statute, will he state what steps the Government propose to take to remedy the insanitary condition of the island, which has been described in Dr. Dittmar's Report as a disgrace to civilisation.]

River Crossing in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that on the 16th ultimo a girl named Jessie Mackinnon, when returning home from Lurebost to Grimshader, island of Lewis, narrowly escaped drowning when passing over the river which has to be crossed when walking from one village to the other; and, seeing that the previous week a woman accompanying the district nurse to Grimshader had a similar narrow escape from drowning, will the Congested Districts Board provide the necessary sum for the erection of a footbridge over the river.

MR SINCLAIR: I was not aware of the facts recited by the hon. Member. If an application is made to the Congested Districts Board by the statutory authority, giving particulars upon which to found a judgment, the matter will receive their consideration.

Sasine Office, Edinburgh.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the engrossing clerks in the Sasine Office, Register House, Edinburgh, who are on piece work, have been idle for long periods lately; that they have received no acknowledgment of the memorial they presented last July craving an amelioration of their alleged grievances, nor of the communication they addressed to him on February 20th last referring to the continued idleness; whether it is the intention of the Government to grant an inquiry into the conditions of their employment; and, if so, when.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware that, at certain times of the year, after the term pressure is over, the staff of engrossers cannot be kept fully employed. My attention has been drawn to the communications referred to by the hon. Member, but the petition by the engrossers cannot be considered apart from questions affecting the general administration of the Sasine Office, and I am unable at present to make any statement as to the intention of the Government.

Melrose District Asylum.

SIR J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will consider the expediency of making statutory provision for the granting of superannuation allowances to the officers and servants of the Melrose district asylum and of other Scottish district and parochial asylums, similar to the statutory provision made for the officers and servants of county and borough asylums in England, district asylums in Ireland, and chartered asylums in Scotland.

MR. SINCLAIR: The suggestion of the hon. Member is deserving of consideration, but it cannot be realised without legislation, and I am unable to undertake to introduce a Bill conferring the necessary powers this session.

Irish Charitable Loan Societies.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether it is intended to promote legislation this session dealing with Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland).

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): It is intended to introduce legislation if time should permit.

Irish Grazing Tracts.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware of the system practised by some landlords of parcelling out their grazing tracts and selling their occupation interests to persons who are led to believe they can purchase such holdings under the Land Act of 1903; and whether, as such a system enables shopkeepers and persons already in possession of large farms to purchase those parcels, thereby debarring the Estates Commissioners from acquiring those lands for distribution amongst evicted tenants, labourers, residents in congested districts, and others, as provided in Clause 2 of the Act, he will state whether the Estates Commissioners will sanction the advance of loans to those purchasers whose action tends to render Clause 2 inoperative.

MR. CHERRY: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer given by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant to a similar Question addressed to him by the hon. Member on March 13th last.†

Irish Land Bonus.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that His Majesty's Government in 1903 obtained the consent of Parliament to a bonus of £12,000,000 on the express understanding that it would serve as a financial bridge to enable landlords and tenants to meet, and to be equally beneficial to them, and that this bonus is now being wholly appropriated by the landlords, who are at the same time extracting from purchasing tenants four and half years' purchase in excess of the average prices certified to be just under previous Purchase Acts; and whether the Government will take any steps to have the benefit of the bonus equitably divided between the parties as Parliament intended.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The hon. and learned Member is of course aware that the intentions of Parliament can only be collected by means of the interpretation according to legal principles of its statutory enactments. The Irish Land Act of 1903 distinctly provides that the bonus on land purchase is payable to the vendor. It would not be possible, in reply to a Question, to discuss the argumentative matters referred to by the hon. Member.

Valuation of Irish Holdings.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by what statutory or other authority does the Irish Land Commission require a holding to be valued, not in its entirety, as laid down in the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, but piecemeal, as shown by the schedules in the cases dealt with; and will he obtain the opinion of any competent and independent English valuer as to the comparative merits of the two systems, valuing a holding as a whole, including the buildings essential for living on and working it, and then making any deductions to find the net value, or valuing each field separately, exclusive of buildings, and adding these and the value of the buildings together to build up a gross value.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the form of schedule referred to has been prescribed by them in pursuance of the statutory powers conferred on them by Section 1 of the Act of 1896, and, inasmuch as the matter is not within my power, I have no right to institute the inquiry suggested in the latter part of the Question. I may, however, add that, as the Commissioners inform me, the principle which they follow of valuing lands apart from buildings was that adopted by Sir Richard Griffith in his valuation of Ireland.

Sub-Commissioners' Instructions.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he lay upon the Table of the House, or make available to Members requiring it, a copy of the instructions under which lay Sub-Commissioners and court valuers act, corresponding to the instructions recently issued by the Estates Commissioners to their inspectors and valuers.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1114.

Mr. BRYCE: The Land Commission assume that by court valuers is meant the Assessors appointed under the Act of 1903 in substitution for the valuers who, prior to that Act, inspected and reported upon holdings as to which appeals were pending. The Land Commission inform me that no instructions have at any time been issued to either Assessors or Assistant Commissioners as to the performance of their judicial functions. Directions as to administrative matters were issued for the guidance of Assistant Commissioners in July, 1897, and these directions appear in Vol. III. of the Appendices to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Acts (c. 9107 of 1898). General Orders with regard to Assessors framed in accordance with the 89th Section of the Act of 1903 were published in the *Dublin Gazette* on November 9th, 1903, and also as statutory rules (No. 1117 of 1903).

Irish Land Finance.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that all the £112,000,000 provided by the Irish Land Act, 1903, is, according to the official Returns and to the true value of land as officially ascertained under previous Purchase Acts, being applied *pro tanto* to the following purposes, namely, to pay the landlords the true value of the property sold £80,000,000, to pay the landlords in excess of the true value £20,000,000, to pay the landlords the bonus £12,000,000, and that while under the Land Act of 1896 the tenant purchasers would have paid in interest and sinking fund for property of the net value of £80,000,000 the gross sum of £137,143,857 under the Act of 1903, as hitherto worked, the tenant purchasers are, under pressure, contracting to pay for property of the same net value £178,100,000, or an increase of more than £40,000,000; and whether he will consider the advisability of taking stronger measures to counteract the gradual imposition of this additional burden upon Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: Without in any way admitting the accuracy of the computations made in the Question, I beg to say that I cannot, within the limits of an Answer, undertake to argue the very intricate questions raised by the hon. Member.

Labourers (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, remembering the benefits conferred upon one section of the community by the Land Act of 1903, he will see that the bonus under the Irish Workers Bill now in preparation shall be relatively commensurate with the needs and deserts of the particular class to be benefited under it.

Mr. BRYCE: If the hon. Member refers to the Labourers (Ireland) Bill which it is proposed to introduce shortly, I may say that I am fully alive to the various necessities of the case, and will do all I can to meet them.

Teaching Irish in Irish Schools.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated the 12th of March 1906, in which a grant of £10 is made on account of each school attended by Gælic-speaking children, on the staff of which there has been for not less than six months of the school financial year at least one Gælic-speaking teacher, other than a pupil teacher, who has given instruction, both in Gælic and English, to the satisfaction of His Majesty's inspector; and whether, in rearranging the scale of fees for the teaching of Irish in Irish schools, he will take into consideration this Scotch precedent.

Mr. BRYCE: The principle of providing Gælic-speaking teachers for schools in districts where Gælic is spoken has my cordial approval, but, as the hon. Member knows, the matter belongs to the Commissioners of National Education as well as to the Irish Government. I will consider the suggestion which the hon. Member makes, but the system of State aid to schools in Scotland differs considerably from that followed in Ireland; the grant of £10 referred to in the Question is a payment to the authorities responsible for the conduct of the school and is applicable to the general purposes of the school. No payments of the kind are made to the managers of National Schools.

in Ireland, and therefore the provisions of the Minute referred to cannot be completely adopted without introducing a principle which will be new in Ireland.

Ballyfermoyle Estate, Roscommon.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Ballyfermoyle estate, in the county Roscommon, is in a congested district; whether, seeing that it has been on offer for sale to the Congested Districts Board for the past six months, he will say whether it has yet been inspected; and, if not, whether he can suggest a date on which the inspection will take place.

MR. BRYCE: The estate in question is in a congested district, but the Congested Districts Board, having regard to their plans, cannot fix a time for inspecting it. There will, however, be no unnecessary delay.

King-Harman Roscommon Estate.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the farm of James Martin, on the estate of Edward Charles S. King-Harman, at Clogher, county Roscommon, has been valued under the rules or directions to valuers, which has been since cancelled, at £5,071 as the price Mr. Martin is to pay; that the value was fixed on the basis of the holding being security for so much, and without regard to the tenant's improvements or the rent payable, or the fact that this figure leaves the yearly annuity £9 more than the tenant paid in rent for the holding prior to 1902; and whether, having regard to the new directions issued to inspectors not to confuse price with security, a fresh inspection of this farm will be ordered for the purpose of fixing a price for the landlord's interest, so as to save the tenant having to pay over again for his own and his predecessor's improvements.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the subject-matter of the Question is still under their consideration, and that they do not think it desirable to go into the details in this House of a matter which has not yet been decided.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a Resolution of the Boyle Town Commissioners regretting that processes have been issued by the Estates Commissioners against purchasers on the King-Harman estate for failing to pay their purchase instalments, and in view of the rate of interest demanded from these tenants, and of the effect of the rumour of the introduction of Canadian cattle upon local fairs and the sale of stock, appealing to the Estates Commissioners to put a stay on these processes; and whether he will take any action in this matter.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that in every case in which a land purchase annuity or the interest on purchase money is in arrear, it is the statutory duty of the Commissioners to proceed for the recovery of the same. The rate of interest is fixed by the Act of 1903 at 3½ per cent. The Commissioners add that out of 2,923 persons liable to pay in respect of their holdings on the King-Harman estate which has been purchased by the Estates Commissioners, only forty-one were in arrear on the last gale day, and upon proceedings being taken eighteen of these have paid, leaving but twenty-three still in arrear.

Galway Police.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many promotions to the rank of sergeant or acting-sergeant have been made in the county Galway during the last ten years; and how many of the persons so promoted were Protestants and Roman Catholics respectively.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector-General that in county Galway during the ten years ending 31st December, 1905, ninety-seven men were promoted to the rank of sergeant, of whom seventy-eight were Roman Catholics and nineteen Protestants. During the same period the number of men promoted to the rank of acting-sergeant in the county was eighty-nine, of whom seventy-seven were Roman

Catholics and twelve Protestants. Promotions to the rank of sergeant are made from a seniority list of all acting-sergeants in the entire force, and men are promoted according to their seniority on this list.

Athenry Outrage.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man named Broderick, who is in the employment of Mr. Frank Shawe Taylor, of Moorpark, Athenry, was shot at between eleven and twelve at night of 31st March while driving to Moorpark on a car, and that the police constable told off to protect Broderick, who was also on the car, was struck by some of the shots; whether the police have made any arrests in connection with the matter; and whether he can say what special steps, if any, the Government is taking to put down the lawlessness which at present exists in county Galway.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to my reply to the similar Question of the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh on Thursday last.† I have only to add that I am informed by the police authorities that there is no exceptional lawlessness in county Galway at present. An ample police force is stationed in the county, and all necessary protection is afforded to those persons who require it.

Mr. Kelly, J.P., and the Loughrea United Irish League.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to a speech made by Mr. P. J. Kelly, J.P., at a meeting held at Loughrea, on Sunday, March 17th last, of the South Galway Executive of the United Irish League, in which he said, speaking of the division of certain farms, that, if necessary, they would be prepared to go out again with the rifle and the blunderbuss to plant the people on the soil; and whether the Irish Government is going to allow Mr. Kelly to continue to exercise the functions of a magistrate after having made use of such language.

*Mr. BRYCE: It is presumed that the Question refers to Sunday, the 11th of March. I have seen a newspaper report of the proceedings at a meeting held at Loughrea on that day, according to which Mr. Kelly used the language quoted in the Question. I am, however, informed that the meeting was held within doors, and that there is no evidence to show whether the language was in fact used. The matter rests in any case with the Lord Chancellor, who informs me that he has no information on the subject of the Question.

Insanitary Irish Schools.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that so many national schools have been condemned as insanitary in country districts, and that the inhabitants are desirous of erecting better buildings, but are in many cases unable to raise the necessary one-third of the cost, the Commissioners of National Education will in such cases consider whether they can advance more than the customary two-thirds of the cost, provided the schools are vested in them.

*Mr. BRYCE: The Question raised by the hon. Member has already received the consideration of the Irish Government and the Commissioners of National Education. I am not, however, in a position to make a statement on the subject pending the settlement of the general question of building grants for national schools in Ireland.

Irish Intermediate Education.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain why the grant from the Board of Intermediate Education has been reduced; and whether, seeing that owing to the Board's regulations a constantly increasing expenditure is made necessary, he will try to have this grant remain as heretofore.

*Mr. BRYCE: The reasons for the reduction of the grant in 1905 were fully explained in my replies to similar Questions on February 26th and March 28th.† I am informed by the Board of Intermediate Education that it would not be feasible to fix definitely the rates or amount of the school grant, because the income of the Board, the number of students examined, and the quality of the answering, are all liable to fluctuation.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 685.

† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 795; cliv., 1286.

Clanricarde Estate, Galway.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names of the Sub Land Commissioners before whom the applications to fix fair rents on the holdings of the Derrygoolin tenants, near Whitegate, county Galway, on the Clanricarde estate, were heard; can he say how long these tenants or their predecessors in title were in occupation of these holdings; what was the condition of the lands when they first occupied them; whether Lord Clanricarde or his predecessors ever expended money in the reclamation of these holdings or allowed for them in rent; did they build dwelling-houses or out-offices or allow for them; whether all the improvements were the absolute property of the tenants; and what was the result of the hearing.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that a Sub-Commission duly delegated sat in open court at Portumna in December last and heard the applications to fix fair rents to which the Question refers. I have already stated that the Land Commission do not think it right to discuss the judicial decisions arrived at by Sub-Commission Courts. These judicial decisions are announced in open court and the results are communicated to the parties concerned, who can obtain copies of the recorded schedules in each case, and if dissatisfied can appeal as provided by law.

Crown Rents in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what amount of quit rents and other perpetual rents payable to the Crown in respect of land in Ireland was paid to the Commissioners of Woods for the financial years 1903, 1904 and 1905 respectively; what amount of quit rent and other rents was redeemed under the Land Purchase Act of 1903 during the years 1904 and 1905 respectively; and what was the average number of years' purchase redemption paid to the said Commissioners.

MR. McKENNA: The amount of quit rents and other perpetual rents paid to the Crown during the year 1903–4 was £32,813, and during the year 1904–5, £32,363. The figures for the year 1905–6 are not yet available. The amount of the rents redeemed under the Land Purchase Act of 1903 was £591 for the year 1904, and £887 for the year 1905. The average number of years' purchase paid for redemption is twenty-five.

Crowenstown Pillar Post.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that the small use made of the pillar post at Crowenstown, Westmeath, is due to the fact that it is cleared in the morning instead of the evening, causing the loss of a day by its use, and that the people whom it ought to serve are obliged, several hours after the postman has left, to travel three or four miles to Delvin in the evening with their letters; and if he will arrange to have the box cleared at a reasonable hour in the evening.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I find that the cost of the postal service in the neighbourhood of Delvin and Crowenstown is already very high compared with the amount of correspondence. The morning collection is made in the ordinary course of the postmen's rounds. To clear the letter box in the evening would require a special collection; and the additional expense involved would not, under the circumstances, be justified.

Mountjoy Postmistress.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, as a result of a private official investigation, Mrs. Beatty, postmistress at Mountjoy, county Tyrone, was recently dismissed; whether he can state the grounds of the dismissal; and what influence was brought to bear, or what representations were made which induced the authorities to refrain from a prosecution.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Mrs. Beatty was dismissed for stealing letters. No influence was brought to bear or representations made in regard to the case.

North Seas Fishery Investigation.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the North Sea international scientific investigations are now sufficiently advanced to enable the Government to form an opinion as to the advisability of closing against foreign as well as British trawlers, areas such as the Moray Firth; and, if so, will he consider the expediency of recommend- the Foreign Office to communicate with other European Powers on the subject, especially having regard to the fact that at the Christiania Conference a Resolution in favour of closing such areas was carried.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I am informed that the investigations to which my hon. friend refers are not sufficiently advanced to justify the expression of any definite opinion on the question. No occasion, therefore, has arisen for considering the expediency of communicating with Foreign Powers on the subject.

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will grant facilities for referring the Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill to a Select Committee.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir. As this seems to be a course which the promoters of the measure would desire, and as we think it would be useful in the interests of the subject itself, we shall be ready to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Scottish Grand Committee.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has considered the congestion of business which has already taken place before the existing Grand Committees; and whether he proposes, on an early date, to set up a Scottish Grand Committee for the consideration of Scottish measures.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears to me that the Grand Committees at present constituted are not sufficient for the work, and I hope that some relief may be obtained as a result of the recommendations of the Select Committee on Procedure. When an important Scottish measure has received the approval of the House, I would gladly see it referred, as has formerly been done with excellent results, to a Scottish Grand Committee.

[The foregoing Answer also covered the following Question on the Paper:—

Mr. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in order to facilitate the progress of business, he will consider the advisability of establishing a Scotch Grand Committee.]

Mr. PIRIE asked if the Committee would consist entirely of Members representing Scottish constituencies.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked how would the right hon. Gentleman get over the House of Lords.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The House of Lords has nothing to do with Scottish Committees in this House. The House of Lords may stretch its prerogatives sometimes pretty far, but it does not interfere with our Committees, and the question does not arise. I think on previous occasions there has been an admixture of English and Irish Members, but the Committees have been predominantly Scottish.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked if the same principle would be applied to Welsh measures.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know that I see any objection to the principle's being applied all round. I have not concealed my opinion, but we are dealing now with Scottish measures.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) asked whether an English Committee would deal with purely English measures.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked whether the Government had any proposals to lay before the Committee on Procedure, and, if so, when they would be made known. The Committee had not sat for some time

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Committee will resume after Easter, when certain proposals will be submitted in the same way as proposals were submitted in regard to the hours.

Mr. PIRIE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to the Resolution passed on the 4th instant by the Convention of Royal Burghs, sitting in Parliament House, Edinburgh, that the time had now arrived for the devolution of the purely domestic business pertaining to the different divisions of the United Kingdom upon local legislatures possessing executive powers; and whether the subject would be remitted to the Committee now sitting on procedure with a view to their consideration and Report, or if he will consider the desirability of its receiving attention from the Government at an early date.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This very large question, the importance of which I fully recognise, will hardly come within the scope of the Select Committee now sitting on the House of Commons Procedure.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury what were the Bills that would be taken on Wednesday before the Motion for Adjournment. With regard to the precedent of the late Government,† he reminded the right hon. Gentleman that in 1904 and 1905 the Bills were taken under the ten minutes' rule.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the Aliens Bill was not a non-contentious Bill. It was taken under the ten minutes' rule, but there were long speeches made in its favour and in criticism of it. He thought that in 1900 the Second Reading of the Agricultural Holdings Bill was taken in the same way. So the Government were not without precedents. They thought of taking on Wednesday the Post Office Money Orders Bill Committee; the Second Reading of the Open Spaces Bill; the Second Reading of the Naval Prize Bill; and the Dean Forest Bill and the Crown Lands Bill, which would be read a second time and referred to a Select Committee. None of these Bills were contentious. He would consult the right hon. Gentleman and see whether he had any objection to any of these Bills being taken. Some of them might be taken to-morrow if the debate on the Workmen's Compensation Bill finished at an early hour.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that if there was any debate on these Bills on Wednesday there would be a serious invasion of the time during which private Members could raise questions on the Motion for Adjournment. He hoped that if any debate did arise it would be adjourned by the Government.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he would undertake that no serious inroad should be made upon private Members' time.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked what the business of the House would be on Tuesday and Wednesday after the holidays, and what Estimates would be taken on the Thursday.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN replied that the Bills they thought of putting down for Tuesday were the Notice of Accidents Bill, Report and Third Reading; Police Superannuation Bill, the same stages; Justices of the Peace Bill, Second Reading; Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill, Registration of Title (Ireland) Bill, and all the other small Bills on the Paper. On Wednesday the Second Reading of the Trade Disputes Bill would be taken. He could not yet say what branch of Supply would be put down for Thursday.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Weetman Harold Miller Pearson, esquire, for the County of Suffolk (North Eastern or Eye Division).

NEW BILL.

PETROLEUM (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Petroleum Acts, 1871 and 1879," presented by Mr. J. W. Benn; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Bowerman, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 24th April and to be printed. [Bill 158.]

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 752.

TRUST ACCOUNTS AUDIT BILL.

"To provide for the Audit of the Capital Accounts of certain Trusts," presented by Mr. Eugene Wason; supported by Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Fenwick, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Radford, and Sir James Woodhouse; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Although I rise from this place to fulfil the pledge contained in the most gracious Speech from the Throne and to ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law of education in England and Wales, I am still very hopeful that I may receive from the House some portion, at all events, of that kindly consideration which it has already bestowed in so bountiful a measure upon many of its new Members. I was not a Member of the last Parliament; and although it is quite true that previously to 1900 I spent eleven years very happily in this House, I did so in corners and purlieus as remote as possible from the Treasury Bench, on the occupants of which, to whichever Party they belonged—and I had experience of both—I was accustomed to gaze with feelings in which amazement, amusement, and admiration struggled alternately for mastery. It is, therefore, a singularly untrained and inexperienced man who now rises to begin a task which is admittedly so difficult that I do not suppose there is a man in this House, full though it be of new Members, who particularly envies me my job. I will, at all events, do my very best to be lucid and to be brief—as lucid as the glimmering twilight of my intelligence admits of, and as brief as is consistent with lucidity. How far I shall succeed in being lucid I must really leave to the kindly consideration of the House. My brevity will be judged by the unfaltering, unresting fingers of the clock. I am happy in this, that I need not inflict any historical retrospect upon the House. For forty years long have we dwelt in the wilderness of strife and contention and mutual suspicion; and during that period we have become, all of us, only too well acquainted with that one single aspect of the educational problem which bears the ill-omened name of the religious difficulty. It is not the most important aspect. Unhappily, it is the one which attracts the most notice. I should be a happy man indeed could I believe that this crowded House had met to discuss this afternoon, before an eager and interested country, some other aspects of this question; had we met here this afternoon to discuss the breed and bearing, the health and happiness, of seven millions of our children; how best to train them to be cleanly in body and mind and speech; how best to fit them for proficiency in those arts and crafts and mechanical sciences which make nations famous, and which are so especially necessary in these days of fierce competition in all the markets of the world; were we here to consider how we could best unfold before those who may chance to be eager students the ample pages of knowledge, rich with the spoils of time; yes, and how to train—and this, surely, is an important question—that great army of teachers on whose shoulders an age somewhat too neglectful of parental responsibility has transferred the burden which is, at all events primarily, a national obligation. These are only a few questions we have not met to discuss. I, at all events, lay no flattering unction to my soul. I know full well that you have all come here expecting for to see a reed shaken by the wind, quivering and trembling in those icy and unfeeling blasts of sectarian differences which, more than anything else, nip the buds of piety and reverence, and diffuse throughout the land a spirit of self-satisfied materialism. Until we build and maintain a national shelter against those devastating blasts we shall make small progress and have no peace.

But I must not be too gloomy too soon. Much, I cheerfully acknowledge, has happened in the last thirty-six years which may well gladden the hearts of that band of men and women who love education and believe in it for its own sake, and are not content to regard it merely as a portico to either one or other—and sometimes it does not seem to matter which—of the numerous churches and chapels belonging to our divers denominations. The Act of 1870 had its faults, but it did, at all events, permit school boards to come into existence, somewhat sluggishly, somewhat reluctantly; but still it did permit them to come into existence; and a glorious work they did. It is almost worth while to be as old as I am to remember what our great towns were like before 1870. I remember what my own native town—city it has become in my absence—was like before 1870. At least a quarter of its children were running idle, ragged, uneducated about its streets. The schools of the poor were nowhere to be seen. You could almost count on your fingers the lovers of education in that great place. Now the public elementary schools of Liverpool are among the best in the world. It has a training college connected with the Roman Catholics which attracts visitors from all parts of Europe; and it has a University, young, indeed, but active and well endowed. Most of all these things began with the school board; and they have made Liverpool, once a neglected city, a centre, and a great centre, of educational spirit and influence. What is true of Liverpool is true of dozens of other great places. All this cost money. It cost more than money. It cost the self-sacrificing labours of the members of those school boards, citizens of renown, Churchmen every bit as much as Dissenters, Conservatives no less than Liberals, who have built up and transmitted down to us a system of educational structure which almost deserves to be called national, for it serves the wants and supplies the needs of a great Protestant community. All these school boards were destroyed, somewhat indiscriminately, I think, by the Act of 1902. They were destroyed in the interest of that great, that blessed word co-ordination; and the vast burden of that educational work, a work of necessity full of details and demanding precise local knowledge and interest in the circumstance and conditions of each individual school, was transferred to the already heavily ladened shoulders of county councils, city councils, and borough councils. This work, I unhesitatingly say, has in many places proved too heavy. It cannot be done properly; the conditions of time and space, which are not yet ripe for Parliamentary abolition, forbid their being performed properly. The Education Committees contain, I admit, the best men in the district—good men, eager, ready, willing to do hard work in the cause which they love; but they have told me themselves over and over again, many of them, that by the time they have left their homes and travelled to Preston, Wakefield, or Exeter, they are met with an agenda of work so vast and various, so crowded with details about which they can know next to nothing, that their hearts sicken within them and their zeal well-nigh perishes of despair. I do not disguise from myself or the House that I believe a time will soon come when something will have to be done, unless the great work of education is to be divorced from local knowledge and interest, and become a lifeless official-ridden clerk-conducted bureaucracy. When the Bill I am asking leave to introduce comes to be examined it will be found to contain a clause which I hope will restore to smaller areas some autonomy and some interest in education. I do not think it is enough; but I think the House will admit that with so many Apollyons straddling across my path I could hardly be expected—the Government could hardly be expected—to level a lance directly at the heads of those great local educational authorities who have so recently been fed full with power, and who not unnaturally have grown somewhat great with what they feed on, and who believe, perhaps rightly, that these evils I have referred to, the existence of which they admit, can really be dealt with by a judicious application of another blessed word, almost as blessed because nearly as long as co-ordination—devolution. I hope it may prove that this clause will be of considerable use. Subject to that clause, and to any modification that it may effect in our system, the local educational authorities I shall have occasion here to refer to are the same local educational authorities as those now in existence.

I have been told by those who were in the last Parliament that it was a somewhat different place from this one; it has "suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange." We have had a general election; and as everybody whom I am addressing has of necessity survived that election somehow, and is full of reminiscences of the battle of the platform, it can surprise no one that by the very first clause of this Bill it is proposed to be provided that on and after 1st January, 1908, a school shall not be recognised as a public elementary school unless it is a school provided by the local education authority. That is to say, from and after the date named, no elementary school shall receive a penny of public money either from rates or taxes unless it becomes a provided school within the meaning of the Education Acts. Unless electoral promises and pledges are fustian and fudge, unless they are mere "sound and fury, signifying nothing," no other clause than this was possible. It does not fall short of our pledge, it does not go beyond our pledge, it is our pledge. It carries also with it a second pledge, in relation to tests for teachers. We have been sliding down what a famous Archbishop of Canterbury once called the "slippery slope" for many a year. I believe to-day we have reached the bottom of the hill. The Act of 1902 held the Bill of 1906 within its arms, many saw it there. If ever men can be said to have intended the natural consequences of their own action, the promoters and supporters of the Bill of 1902 must be said to have intended the first clause of the Bill of 1906. The late Prime Minister, whose absence from the House and the reason for it I personally greatly deplore—for although a most formidable critic he is certainly always the most agreeable of auditors—the right hon. Gentleman, winding up the Third Reading debate on the Bill of 1902, made use of these significant words, having in them almost something of a prophetic strain. He said—

> "I ask no man to change his opinion upon this Bill, I ask no man to give up what he regards as a conscientious conviction; my demand is simply this—living as we do in a free and constitutionally governed country, that they should attempt to make the best of a measure passed by the legislature of this country, and that if that measure fails, and in so far as it fails, they should devote their attention to amending it. I do not ask them to approve it. I do not ask them to say that if they had been in power they would not have found some much better plan for dealing with the infinitely difficult problem; but I do ask them, I do make this demand on the patriotism and public spirit of every class, clerical and non-clerical, in this country, that when this Bill becomes law they shall do their best to work it while it is unamended, and if it requires amendment that they shall use constitutional means to amend it in conformity with the declared will of the people."

That is what we are here to do to-day, using constitutional means to amend the law in conformity with the declared will of the people. In old days the voluntary schools of this country, the old British schools, with their noble maxim, "schools for all," and the national schools, which were frankly Church of England schools without a conscience-clause—these voluntary schools were voluntary schools in substance and in fact. No child had need to attend them, and no citizen was required to subscribe to them. In 1876 attendance became compulsory, and in 1902 the denominational schools of the country were all dumped down upon the rates, subscriptions became obligatory, and were garnered by that pious Churchman the rate-collector. In 1870 the schools were promised some 50 per cent. towards the burden of their great expenditure. Of what that proportion has grown to I will not speak now to tease you with the figures. Everybody long ago, I cannot but think, must have foreseen this inevitable result—there is no other way out of it—where the public money is taken complete public control must of necessity follow. In many places the abolition and destruction of this vexatious dual system will come as a great relief. The officials of several of our great educational authorities have told me that they are sick with the worry and annoyance of the costly employment of officials who have little else, indeed, sometimes nothing else, to do but to adjust the haggling accounts of the lighting, warming, and heating of these schools between the private owners and the local authority. Dual control has had a gloomy history in this country and in Ireland. We know what comes out of it. I believe that the abolition of it in this case will save an enormous amount of time, temper, and the ratepayers' money.

Now, I do not deny that this first clause affects the alliance which, though constantly varying in its terms and always on a very sandy foundation, has existed for some time between the State and the owners of a certain number of school houses. The State has been content for many years to carry on the business of a public elementary school within these school houses, on five days a week, on certain terms more or less satisfactory to the owners of those buildings. We now propose other terms, and we hope that when they come to be examined they will not be found to wear too harsh an aspect. An alteration is unavoidable, unless it can be contended that the present system is riveted upon us for ever and that we cannot, even if we would, obtain the control of our own public elementary school system. Such a contention is, I submit, perfectly impossible. It is always pleasant to me to quote Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone is often cited as an example of a man who carried this notion of the rights of voluntary schools as high as it ever was carried, at all events by any member of the Party to which he belonged. Speaking on June 16th, 1870, he said—

> "If persons are to be encouraged to expend their own resources by the prospect of public aid, it is perfectly plain that the public aid of which the prospect is held out to them ought to have something like permanence attached to it; I do not mean from generation to generation, but from year to year. It ought to carry the same sort of confidence as to its continuance as has been carried by the annual votes of this House of sums disbursed by the Privy Council."

He did not put it higher than that, but even he at that time was careful to bargain and condition for the obligation of the voluntary schools to supply at least 50 per cent. of the cost of their maintenance. I will not refer to the debates of 1897 or to the discussions of 1902. You know what was then said. We growled then, and if the growl has grown into a roar nobody need be surprised.

Now, this first clause carries with it certain definite consequences. Every voluntary school receiving rates or grants becomes at once, on so doing, a provided school within the meaning of the Education Acts, and consequently it will receive the same kind of religious instruction as is now being given in the provided schools of the country, subject to the famous condition that no catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school, and subject alway to a conscience-clause. This is to be the general rule throughout the land. And on what is it based? It is based, I do honestly believe, upon the happy experience of thirty-six years during which millions and millions of English children have received their whole school education under these conditions without question and without demur on the part of the parents, or of the children attending these schools. On that experience we are content to build. It is often said that this school board religious instruction, as it is contemptuously described —that these religious exercises and the Biblical instruction given in the schools were a Nonconformist invention. It has been said by ecclesiastics of eminence, who ought to know better, that it is a Nonconformist religion. As a Nonconformist born and bred, as a man nurtured in Nonconformist history and Nonconformist traditions, as one who might almost be described as having been born in the very library of a Nonconformist minister, I protest against that description. It is absolutely without truth and without foundation. If you want to find out for yourselves, as I wish every Member of this House would find out for himself, the nature and the character of the religious instruction given in the provided schools by almost all—practically by all —the local education authorities, you must seek for it in the various syllabuses which have been printed and issued by these authorities. I have seen scores of such syllabuses and have had the pleasure of reading them. It has been the only part of my duty during the last few months that has done me any spiritual good. I will give but one example, and take it from Hampshire. There is safety in Hampshire; there is nothing of the Age of Reason or of the Feast of Reason about Hampshire. I have received a letter from Sir William Portal, in which that gentleman, who is vice-chairman of the Hampshire County Council, says—

> "I venture to lay before you the course adopted by us for religious teaching in our provided schools. In 1904, and for many years previously, we were specially fortunate in having so wise a man as Lord Northbrook as chairman of the county council, and it was my privilege as vice-chairman to be associated with him. A carefully selected special committee was appointed to draw up a religiou syllabus for our council schools. This special committee consisted of seven persons—two members of the county council, two from the Church of England Clergy, two Nonconformist ministers; a Roman Catholic priest and a lady who has been much interested in the subject. The committee was unanimous in the recomendations they made for a syllabus for religious instruction, as to the form of prayer to be used at the opening and closing of the school, and as to the hymns in daily use. These recommendations were submitted to the education committee, which consisted of fifty persons, most of them members of the Church of England, and they were unanimously approved of before final submission to the county council. The syllabus has since been adopted and carried out in the council schools in Hampshire. You will be

pleased to learn how harmoniously and unanimously the question of religious teaching has been determined in Hampshire."

What is true of Hampshire is true, I think it may be said, of all the syllabuses drawn up by all the local authorities throughout the country. They are not the work of Nonconformists, but the work of good and pious men of every creed, who have done their best, and have done it successfully, as Sir William Portal has said, to secure harmonious relations throughout the county. I would like hon. Gentlemen to put themselves this question: What substantial difference do they think exists in Hampshire between the religious teaching in the county schools conducted under the syllabus, and the religious instruction given in the ordinary national schools in communion with the Churches? This admirable system has grown up of itself. It was in no sense a foster child of Parliament. If you read the debates of 1870 you will find that eminent Parliamentarians made fun of it, and so distinguished a man as Mr. Disraeli ventured to prophesy that the result would be that all sorts of different religions would be taught in different parts of the country—a Leeds religion, a Liverpool religion, and an Exeter religion. That has not proved to be the case. The inbred piety and good sense of the English people have prevented anything of the sort springing up. I say that it is a system which suits our Protestant population, and a child is seldom withdrawn from this religious instruction. Old teachers, men with thirty years experience behind them, have told me that casting their mind back over that long period they scarcely remember a single instance of any one withdrawing his child from it. Even unbelievers—and they are numerous in large towns—do not as a rule withdraw their children from this instruction. They probably agree with that very wise man, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who said—

> "That if you want to make your son a fanatic, the best thing to do is to withdraw him from all sympathy with the religious feelings of the age in which he lives."

That is not a wise course, and I believe, therefore, we might honestly say that this system, ridiculed as it has been, of Biblical instruction, is in conformity with, suits the needs of, and has secured the approval of the large majority of the Protestant population of this country. Now, what is the alternative? To banish the opening prayer, to silence the familiar hymn, to exclude the Bible save in elegant extracts—there may be logic in that, but I contend that to do so would be to act against the whole desire of the nation; and I certainly would say, let us preserve as long as we can, in a prosaic age and amongst a prosaic people, any idealism we can lay our hands on. "Where no vision is the people perisheth." Our people have been accustomed to look for such scanty glimpses as they have ever obtained of the heavenly vision in the pages of the Bible, and I can see no reason to seek to interfere with what I believe to be the national feeling. The other alternative is denominational education all round —a multiplicity of schools. I will not stop to argue that. I regard it as frankly impossible. I do not deny for a moment that during all the years this strife has been going on between Church and Dissent, the onlookers, the non-combatants have grown more and more numerous, and some of them not a little weary and disgusted. They are disposed to say, "Carry on your quarrels, if you will, on consecrated ground only, and leave us in peace and in possession of our schools and of our children." For the reasons I have given I hope no such views as these will prevail. If they do, it will be because of the strange alliance between those who call themselves secularists and those able men, few in number, who regard with suspicion and dislike the simple religious exercises and Biblical instruction which some people go so far as to describe as a new religion. I will not enter into any controversy with any living authorities, but I cannot help referring to one great Archbishop of Canterbury who entertained a very different opinion about the value of these simple exercises and this Biblical instruction. I mean the late Dr. Temple. He was a scholar, a college tutor, a school inspector, a great headmaster. He was Bishop of Exeter, Bishop of London, and Archbishop of Canterbury. He knew this question from top to bottom, and he never hesitated to express his opinion that he attached extreme value to the instruction given in our board schools, and that he was very far from thinking that there was anything in it inconsistent with the children's receiving at other times, at other hands, and other places the full teaching of the denomination of their parents.

Starting, then, with complete popular control, carrying with it the appointment by the local educational authority of the teacher, to whom no creed test can be applied, and with such syllabus teaching as the local educational authority adopts, subject to the conscience-clause, I come now to consider the question of the necessary supply of school places. One half of the children of the country are now in non-provided schools—some very good, some not so good, some bad, and some very bad. Now, what is required ? The use of the school-house for five days a week from nine o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon. And for what purpose is it required ? To carry on State-aided, rate-maintained, Government-inspected public elementary schools—a public institution of the very first class of material importance. The second clause of the Bill proposes to authorise the local educational authorities, for the purpose of continuing any existing voluntary school as a provided school, to make, with the consent of the Board of Education, any arrangement they can or they think fit, by agreement with the owners of the school-house, for obtaining such use of it as is required for carrying on a public elementary school. That is to say, they may make such arrangements as they can by agreement with the owners of these buildings, or such of them as are fit for the purpose of carrying on within their walls, as heretofore, the business of a public elementary school; subject, however, to this condition, that the local educational authority shall, during the continuance of any such agreement, assume the whole responsibility of maintaining the entire fabric of the whole school building. That is a very potent condition. Although I do not want to pledge myself to figures, I think the cost of it has been estimated at 2s. a place, which I think will come to something like £260,000 a year. That is a condition to which any arrangement must be subject. Of course I do not doubt that the agreements which are come to will vary in different places, and will vary as to the length of time during which they are to endure. They may also vary as to the amount of occupation, rent, or otherwise, which may be arranged between the parties, subject only to this, that there can be no contracting out of public control and all that public control means, and no contracting out of the obligation on the part of the authority to maintain the fabric. I do not want to extol the advantages of such a scheme, but I may point out that under it it is sufficiently obvious, inasmuch as the owners of the premises remain there, owners in sole and exclusive possession, during the whole of Saturday and Sunday, and also have the use of them in the evening on week-days, that the maintenance of the whole cost of their permanent upkeep is a very considerable gift to the owners of the schools of an expenditure which they would otherwise have to bear.

Now, as to the opportunities which are sometimes called facilities for special denominational teaching in those of our hitherto non-provided schools that may choose to come to terms with the local educational authority; and I will say here, for reasons which I will give in a moment, that the facilities in this Bill are to be confined to hitherto non-provided schools. We do not propose to interfere in any way with the present system of our provided schools. With regard to the opportunities in any schools which may come to terms with the public educational authority I think we shall all agree that those facilities, if they are facilities at all, must be real and not sham ones. They must be a genuine, honest alternative on the days when they are allowed to be given for the ordinary religious instruction of the school. Clause 3, which I will read shortly, provides in effect that if the affording of facilities under this section has been made a condition of any arrangement for the use by the local educational authority of the school house of the transferred voluntary school, that authority shall afford those facilities by enabling children whose parents wish them to receive religious instruction of a special character to receive that instruction on not more than two mornings a week, and no part of the expenditure of giving religious instruction of that special character under this section shall be paid by the local educational authority.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): Is the religious instruction to be given out of school hours or in school hours?

*MR. BIRRELL: I will explain that in a moment. Perhaps the hon. Baronet will allow me to proceed in my own way and to explain the provisions of the conscience-clause which I propose to insert in the Bill in connection with which this question must be considered. I consider myself somewhat of an expert—it is the only matter in which I do consider myself an expert—on this subject of the conscience-clause. It has always been a matter of grief to many experts that under the old Act of 1870 the conscience-clause proved to be a loose and unsatisfactory contrivance. The reason was that the promoters and supporters of that Bill did what all of us are somewhat too apt to do: they forgot their own childhood. Those promoters and supporters who belonged to the dominant section had never known what it was to be in a minority in childhood. But that is an experience which has always been mine. If they had known they would have appreciated that uniformity is the uniform creed of childhood and that any reasonable child would rather be wicked than singular. To expect any small, thin-skinned mortal between the age of five and fourteen to go into a school in which there is a dominant majority and demand separate treatment is to put upon him a burden which he will never discharge. I remember the burden being put upon my shoulders when I attended a Church of England school in Liverpool, the foundation stone of which had been laid by Mr. Gladstone, and therefore I need hardly say it must have been a thoroughly sound Church of England school, of being asked to claim from my master exemption from the Church catechism. I flatly refused to do anything of the kind, and as a consequence I can repeat it from beginning to end to-day. No conscience-clause is worth anything unless it carries with it the right of withdrawal during the time religious instruction is being given. You may then possibly, instead of being an object of obloquy, become an object of envy. This clause says that the parent shall not be under an obligation to cause his child to attend at the school-house except at the time allotted in the time-table exclusively to secular instruction. There is nothing really new in that provision, for, as a matter of fact—I hope the House will take cognisance of the fact—no parent has ever been prosecuted for not sending his child to school during the hours of religious instruction. For the purposes of the law school attendance begins at the beginning of the time fixed for secular instruction. It may be said that this may give rise to parents employing their children between nine and nine forty-five in odd jobs. Such a course is greatly to be deprecated. I hope it will not occur, but if it should, it would be well that we should strengthen our laws against child labour. The facilities or opportunities referred to in Clause 3 will be given (1) in transferred non-provided schools only; (2) when stipulated for by the owners as part of their bargain with the local educational authority; (3) when demanded by the parents of children actually attending; (4) they will be given at the expense of the denomination demanding them, and (5) not during the hours of compulsory attendance nor by the teachers of the ordinary staff.

On this last point two things, I think, may here be usefully said. First of all, the ordinary staff will be engaged in giving the ordinary religious instruction in the school, and secondly, I have been much struck with the petitions that I have been receiving from the parents of children who demand that their children should have the opportunity of being taught the catechism, including, I have no doubt, the explanation of the Prayer Book by teachers who believe in it. It is no easy matter to command faith. Calvanists and Arminians alike, whatever may have been their success in other fields, have failed in this—creeds, articles, subscriptions—all fail. None the less, the common sense of mankind, I feel convinced, craves that definite and precise religious teaching should be given only by those who believe in it, at all events to children. I wish to put in a saving clause against some of our eminent divines. I think, therefore, as the teachers are to be appointed by the local education authorities, and without the imposition of any religious test, it is desirable that those who wish their children to receive particular denominational teaching should have it given, not only at their own expense, but by teachers of their own choice. If it should happen to be given by the clergyman of the parish, that, after all, would only be restoring to that important person what has always been his canonical duty.

I ought perhaps to mention the reasons why we do not propose under this Bill that these opportunities and facilities should be given in the provided schools. In the first place, as all teaching of a religious character is optional with the local educational authorities at the present moment—though I am glad to think that almost all educational authorities avail themselves of the opportunities of giving it—still, as it is optional, it obviously would not have been possible to make these facilities compulsory. Secondly, it would have brought us, I am certain, into conflict with the local authorities; and I have already had grievous experience of the disadvantage to even the most powerful Board of Education of coming into conflict with a local authority. Thirdly, you must remember that these local authorities, being masters in their own house, do what they like with their own premises, and in some places they have, with varying success, allowed denominational teachers to use their premises. Fourthly, every kind of facility would have to be given to the board school, while in the non-provided schools it will be found possible to confine denominational teaching, and it is proposed that it should be confined, to the kind of denominational teaching stipulated for by the owners of the school. In the board or provided schools it would have to be all kinds, and I think that any one acquainted with the school system or with large schools will know that such facilities, even if granted on paper, would be illusory in practice. Lastly, they would destroy the discipline of the school and thereby incur the opposition—and most powerful it is—of the man who is certainly entitled to be captain on his own quarter-deck—I mean the head teacher of the school. Under the provisions of this Bill all public elementary schools will become provided schools knowing but one control, that of the local educational authority. Between the schools there will be one difference only. In those schools which have been acquired under Clause 2, special denominational teaching, of the kind stipulated for by the owners, will be given if demanded by any parents on two mornings in the week, at the expense of those demanding it, to those children whose parents demand it, but not by the teacher nor in compulsory hours.

Thus far the facilities or opportunities I have spoken of have been of a compulsory character. When demanded and when required, the authorities must grant them. We have now to consider whether we cannot introduce some elasticity into our system in towns and populous places, so as to allow the local educational authority, if so minded, to grant in certain cases these extended opportunities or facilities. We think that this can be done, and we think that it should be done; and I cannot do better now than read the clause in which effect is given to the intentions of the Government in this matter—

"The local educational authority may give extended facilities for religious instruction of some special character in any transferred voluntary school in an urban area, by permitting the religious instruction given in the school to be instruction of that special character, notwithstanding anything contained in the previous Act, if an application is made to them for these extended facilities, and if they are satisfied, after holding a local public inquiry, that the parents of at least four-fifths of the children attending a school desire these facilities, and that there is accommodation in schools not affected by the permission given under this section for the children attending the school whose parents do not desire these extended facilities. Where extended facilities are so given the local education authority may also, if they think fit, permit the teachers employed in the school to give the instruction desired, but not at the expense of the authorities."

Mr. Speaker, this clause, which will require and will receive the careful and grave consideration of all parts of the House, is an attempt, and, I think, an honest attempt, to meet the necessities of the case. Of all the vile phrases that have leapt to light during our recent discussions, I think the vilest of all—it must have been the invention of some Erastian humourist—is the phrase "the Nonconformist conscience." It is ill jesting with men's consciences. If English history teaches us anything, it teaches us that. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have long thought fit to jest with the Nonconformist conscience. I do not know that they have found it a very good joke. The Nonconformist conscience is no worse and no better than the consciences of other men. We all have consciences. Even I have a conscience, and in its tenderest place is a hearty aversion to anything, if I can avoid it, which injures another man's conscience. So far as the great bulk of our Protestant population is concerned, so far as the great bulk of the parents are concerned whose children go to our public elementary schools, I do not think there is anything contained in our proposals to wound the feelings or the conscience of any man. I believe that the education supplied in the provided schools, and also that which will be supplied in non-provided schools under the provisions of this Bill, with the opportunities and facilities it contains, will be an education consonant with the wishes of the vast majority of the parents of the children attending the public elementary schools of this country. There are, I know, Churchmen who regard with dislike and suspicion undenominational teaching, as it is called. The syllabus teaching, which hon. Members can examine for themselves, and from which I am certain they will learn much, is regarded by some English Churchmen with suspicion and dislike. Then there are the Jews and the Roman Catholics. The conscience-clause does not meet the necessities, real or supposed, of those classes. All minorities must suffer. It is the badge of their tribe. We have all suffered in our day, most of us, from being in a minority. It is the special province, I believe, of enlightened Liberalism to see to it that we do not put any avoidable hardship on anybody's conscience. Nonconformists are often accused, by people who know as little of them as they do of Zulus, of narrow mindedness. They are said to have no sympathies beyond their own denomination. I do not believe that to be the case at all. I believe that among Nonconformists there is great sympathy with High Churchmen. I believe that the books and sermons and pamphlets of High Churchmen are read with deep interest by many Nonconformists. Nonconformists have never failed to take interest in the Jewish schools of this great metropolis; and as to Roman Catholic schools, the man must have a heart like the nether millstone who is not deeply touched by the enormous sacrifices which the Roman Catholics of this country have made to provide for the educational and religious needs of their fellow believers. They are cut off from much which in other times they were fairly entitled to consider their own—cathedrals and other splendid foundations—and they have had cast upon them the obligation of looking after hundreds and thousands of poor Irish folk—children whose fathers or grandfathers were driven out of Ireland and compelled to come to England under pressure of circumstances for which no man in this House, whatever his Party opinions or his opinions on Irish history may be, can hold them responsible. That great obligation they have taken on their own shoulders. I believe I am right when I say it is a charge that ought not to be brought against the Liberal Party as a whole, or against any section of it, that it is without sympathy with those from whom on many important points they must radically differ. It may be said, "After all, there is not much in this clause. It leaves everything to the local authority, and the local authority can do as it likes, and it need not do it unless it likes." I admit it is asking these minorities to trust in the generosity, the equitableness, and the fair-mindedness of the local authority. I believe they can do so safely. I have enough Scottish blood in my veins to be fully alive to the shortcomings of Englishmen; but it may fairly be said of them that they have a positive genius for the honest administration of their own laws. For other people's laws they may have some insular disdain, but for the laws they have passed themselves, which they understand and for which they count themselves responsible, they have a great affection and a great regard; and I believe, therefore, that public opinion would resent—and public opinion would primarily prevail—any churlish withholding by any public local authority of these permissive privileges, which are intended, at all events, in the interest of peace, and what to me is most important, having regard to my office, in the interest of educational efficiency.

I must say one word at least about those non-provided schools which decline the proposal of the local education authority and do not come to terms with them. There are, speaking roughly, three kinds of non-provided schools — those which are privately owned, those which are held on trusts which admit of a non-educational use, and those which are dedicated in perpetuity to educational trusts and cannot be diverted therefrom, and are consequently already under the control of the law affecting charitable trusts or charities. The owners of school premises included in Parts I. and II. are, of course, free agents altogether. They can refuse to allow the local education authority the use of their school premises for five days a week, and then they can either keep open the premises as a school without receiving any public money, either from the rates or from the taxes, or they can close them altogether, pull them down, or do what they like with them. So, too, can those who hold a trust which admits of the property being diverted to non-educational uses; they can close the doors of the school and divert the property as the trust allows. But those in Part III. are not quite in that position; for they must either keep open their schools, or if they propose no longer to keep open their schools they must go to the law to authorise some scheme of appropriating their property to such uses as the law may think proper to allow. This Bill does not propose to make any alteration in the law relating to such matters, but it does propose to alter the jurisdiction, because as the law now stands the Board of Education would be the authority to make a scheme and to direct the future of any one of those schools, and as the Board of Education might perhaps be considered suspect in this instance—and I quite agree that in my case it does not possess sufficient knowledge to deal with the question as it ought to be dealt with—the Bill proposes to appoint a Commission of three members. I am not prepared to give their names to-day, but the legal element will, I hope, predominate; at all events it must be in the chair. The Commission will be the authority before which those owners of school-houses who have not come to terms with the local authority will be carried for the purpose of determining their schemes. In making such schemes—

> "The commissioners shall act in accordance with the principles followed by the High Court in exercising the ordinary jurisdiction as to charities inherent in that court, but they shall not treat a proposal to carry on an elementary school as a proper mode of giving effect to the trusts of the school-house unless sufficient guarantee is given for the effective continuance of the school as a certified efficient school for a period of at least five years."

A certified efficient school, I may say, is a school within the law in this sense, that to attend it is to obey the law, but it does not receive any assistance from the rates or taxes.

> "If they are of opinion that the best mode of giving effect to the trust is to allow the local education authority to use the school-house for the purposes of a public elementary school they may by the scheme require the local education authority to comply with such conditions as to payment, or otherwise not being inconsistent with this Act, as they think just."

That is, they will have the power, which perhaps they would not otherwise have, of fixing pecuniary inducements or recompense to the school which may be transferred, if transferred it is, by any scheme they may offer. That is the clause so far as I think I need read it. There are certain clauses relating to teachers which I think of importance. One is that a teacher employed in a public elementary school shall not be required, if he has conscientious objections, to give any religious instruction as part of his duties as a teacher. We also save the rights of all existing teachers in existing voluntary schools which may be transferred. Their appointment will be in no way affected by the fact that the owners of the school transfer it to the local authority. Their rights will be preserved as well as their appointment.

The House will certainly expect me to say one word about finance. This Bill means money. The Duke of Devonshire, speaking, I think, on the Third Reading of the Bill of 1902, said he thought that when what he called Cowper-Temple religion applied to the voluntary schools of the country, half of them would close their doors. How far that was a sound speculation I have no means whatever of saying. We are dealing, I admit, with things which it is impossible accurately and entirely to apprehend. Men will differ as to the number of the schools which will readily avail themselves of the proposals of this Bill. For my own part, I cannot but believe that many of them, the majority of them, after full consideration will see that this is a proposal which they can well accept in the interests of a national settlement of this great question. It is proposed in connection with the Bill to give, in addition to all the existing grants from the Exchequer in aid of public elementary education, a further annual grant of £1,000,000. The actual cost which will be thrown upon the local education authority as a consequence of the Bill cannot be estimated at the present moment with any approach to certainty. Much will depend upon the spirit of mutual concession which may actuate the local education authorities on the one side, and the trustees and owners of the existing non-provided schools on the other. It seems most unlikely, however, that an annual grant of £1,000,000 will not be far in excess of the actual charge which the Bill will throw upon local education authorities. This sum represents a capital of between £20,000,000 and £25,000,000, allowing for interest at from 3 to 3½ per cent. and for a sinking fund of 1 per cent.; and it is quite clear that the value of the use of the non-provided schools for which the local education authorities would have to pay does not reach anything like this amount. It is proposed that the grant of £1,000,000 shall be distributed in aid of the local education rate upon terms to be laid down hereafter in the Education Code. Parliament will have a full opportunity of discussing those terms both on the consideration of the code itself and on the Estimates. But it is not advisable to lay down at once the conditions on which this additional grant will be distributed. In the first place, it is necessary for the Board of Education to have some considerable experience of the arrangements made under the Bill between the local education authorities and the trustees of the non-provided schools. Without such experience no estimate can be formed of the probable additional burden in consequence of the Bill in individual areas. In the second place, it is most inadvisable to promise to meet out of a grant from the Exchequer the whole cost—whatever it may be—of acquiring the non-provided schools. The arrangements must be made by the local education authorities, who are in the best position to negotiate on favourable terms, and it is essential to give them every inducement to exercise economy. While, as has been said already, the total amount of the grant will probably be greatly in excess of the total new burden imposed, leaving a wide margin for particular difficulties that particular authorities may have to contend with, it is not proposed that the State should take over the burden of extravagant expenditure to which any local authority might commit itself. The general principle upon which the Board of Education will proceed in the ultimate distribution of the new grant will be to have regard both to the actual increase of local burden consequent upon the Bill and to the existing amount of the education rate.

I have detained the House a very long time. The Bill is divided into five parts. The first part I have explained, I think, sufficiently for the necessities of the moment. The second part deals with what is an enormously important subject—educational endowments, and I would commend the clauses in the Bill to educational zealots and friends of education in all parts of the country. The object of this part of the Bill is to make the educational endowments as serviceable as possible for the advancement of education and to consolidate, simplify, and improve the administrative machinery now in use. At present the Board of Education makes schemes for educational endowments under two sets of Acts known as the Charitable Trusts Acts and the Endowed Schools Acts, which, with the necessary commentary, make up a very heavy volume. The Bill substitutes for these highly technical statutes and for their diverse and complicated procedures, a single procedure embodied in a few simple clauses designed to be intelligible to the ordinary parochial elector. It widens as well as strengthens the Board's powers, and by establishing a more elastic jurisdiction will, it is hoped, facilitate the settlement of controversies which have in the past been a serious obstacle to educational progress. It rests its procedure on the principle, adopted as long ago as 1868 by the great Schools Inquiry Commission (of which the late Lord Iddlesleigh, Dean Hook, and Archbishop Temple were members) that—

> "Parliament is the only body that can be considered as the supreme trustee of endowments."

I do not think it will be any use for me to go through these highly technical clauses, though I think when they are read they will make their meaning quite plain, and will, I am sure, be the subject of much interest and discussion when they come to be considered by the House, after hon. Members have had an opportunity of seeing the Bill in print and making themselves conversant with its terms.

The third part of the Act deals with divers reforms—administrative reforms—which, I think, are well worthy of the consideration of the House. Among them is the power of delegation, of devolution, to which I have already referred. There is a clause extending the period for the repayment of money borrowed by a county council from thirty to sixty years. This will tend to make money cheap. We also propose to abolish the 2d. limit. The fourth part of the Bill relates to a council for Wales. That, however, is a matter with which I do not now propose to deal. Singular unanimity upon the subject appears to prevail, not only among Welsh Members in this House, but amongst the Welsh counties themselves; and certainly if on investigation it is found that this country can hand over to Wales whatever her share may be of moneys allocated to education and leave her to distribute it in her own way, Whitehall will have no occasion to regret her departure.

There is one important matter on which I should like to say a word before I sit down, and that is that the present law relating to elementary education generally is in a hopeless mess. It is found in a variety of statutes, references backwards and forwards from one to another are necessary, and the whole thing is most discreditable. The law as it is at present, quite apart from anything contained in this Bill, has been consolidated by a distinguished draftsman, and it is ready for consideration. I hope that after Easter the House will allow me—it can only be done by consent—to take that Bill through its early stages, and refer it to a Select Committee in order that its terms may be considered. It is purely a consolidating measure, unless it be in one tiny respect, in regard to the vexed subject of school attendance. In order really to consolidate that law one or two trivial alterations appear to be necessary; and an instruction or something of that kind may be necessary to enable these alterations to be made. This consolidating Bill can then go up to another place, and after passing through all its stages there it can wait until the Bill I am now asking leave to introduce is ready to be slipped into its place in the consolidating Bill, and then at the end of the session we shall have one Act of Parliament instead of half-a-dozen. I am assured by all who are actively engaged in the administration of the law that this would shorten their labours, lengthen their lives, sweeten their tempers, and therefore do something to enable them better to discharge their most high and difficult functions.

Now I have said all I have got to say. I put together these ill-constructed sentences last Saturday in Battersea Park, a very beautiful place, rich with the promise, I hope not the delusive promise, of early summer—a place simply swarming with children, who all seemed animated by one desire—namely, to ascertain the time from me. Although at first I found their attentions somewhat disconcerting, I very soon came to perceive how congruous was their presence with the whole bent and cast of my thoughts. A hope, I trust not a delusive hope, stole into my breast, although I am not a sanguine man, that perhaps even this measure after it has received, as it will receive, the full consideration and deliberations of this House will be found to be a step forward in the right direction for securing to the children of this country an immunity from those quarrels which are not their quarrels but our quarrels, and to help in securing for them an education which will make them—the finest raw material in the world, as I am satisfied they are—fit citizens of this country, and qualified to play a great part after we have all gone, and thus enable this beloved land of ours to be what it ought to be, the pulsing heart of a beneficent and freedom-loving Empire.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to Education in England and Wales."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): The right hon. Gentleman has introduced an important, complicated, and controversial measure with all his accustomed force and clearness, and with as much of his accustomed humour as the subject and circumstances allow. He has consulted many distinguished persons, has received many deputations, and it remains to be seen whether in the multitude of counsellors he has found wisdom, safety, or peace. There are various points in the Bill not affecting its main provisions which will need careful consideration when they arise. The question of the abandonment of the register, the regulations for which were prepared by the consultative Committee four years ago, with much care, will affect young students, men and women, who have spent time and money in qualifying themselves for a place on the register. It is now abandoned in deference to the susceptibilities of an association of teachers who possess considerable political influence. The simplification of the law respecting endowments under the Charitable Trusts Act and Endowed Schools Acts is no doubt useful, but in so far as it involves the acquisition by the Board of Education of larger powers it will need to be carefully considered. So, too, with the proposal for establishing an Education Council for Wales; here we shall have to consider not merely the necessity for retaining the influence which the Board of Education should exercise in assisting local authorities in the discharge of their functions, but the rights of the minority in Wales, which though large in numbers, is wholly unrepresented in the House.

But the backbone of the Bill is the treatment of the so-called religious difficulty, and it is solved by the abolition of the voluntary school. It is worth while to ask, What is this institution which is to be abolished? The voluntary schools were the main source of supply for elementary education before the Act of 1870, and they were built almost always in order that, together with secular instruction, definite religious instruction of a certain character should be given. This instruction has, since 1870, been given under a conscience-clause which, so far as I know, has operated so as to prevent any injury to conscience arising from the practice of the voluntary schools. But until 1902 the voluntary schools were in no relation to any local authority. Each was a separate unit, subject only—except as regarded school attendance—to the Board of Education and the code. The Act of 1902 brought all the elementary schools into line, and the arrangement made was as follows. If the managers of a school kept up and provided the school-building free of charge during school hours, and, if need be, for three nights in the week, and if they carried out every direction of the local authority as regarded secular instruction, they were entitled to rate aid equally with the council schools, and they enjoyed, in the constitution of the management of the school, security for the continuance of the religious teaching for the promotion of which the school was built. This arrangement seems reasonable, but it is not satisfactory to the majority of the present Parliament, and I understand that we are now to have a uniform system of council schools. But at what cost are the schools to be acquired? The President of the Board of Education proposes that the local authority should rent the schools during school hours throughout the week, and should maintain the fabric, and he has allocated £1,000,000 a year to the assistance of the local authorities for the purpose. I think that his estimate is sanguine, and we have also to consider the possibility that the schools may not always be for hire. Owners or trustees may have other purposes for the buildings and may decline to give them up to an authority which intends to frustrate the very objects with which the schools were built. The local authority will then have to build other schools. The ratepayer will realise how much he owed to the voluntary school system, and the two sets of buildings will stand, perhaps side by side, monuments to the wisdom, the economy, and the tolerance of the Parliament of 1906.

In place of the voluntary schools we are to have a complete system of council schools, and in all of these undenominational religious teaching is to be given as under the Cowper-Temple clause. I have no desire to disparage this kind of teaching. It has been often well and effectively pious, and I am glad that by recognising this teaching as universal this Government have definitely declared against purely secular education. But this teaching is not all that we want. In the first place, the teachers who give it have hitherto been trained in Church of England training colleges. Now other types of training colleges have come into the field, and we cannot any longer be sure that the teacher will be as well prepared for this work. And in the second place, this sort of teaching is not satisfactory to many who desire definite religious instruction for their children; although the teaching is endowed at their expense. I do not think that the grounds of their desire are fully realised. Let me try to explain them. We have been maintaining, and urging for some time past on our elementary schools, that education is not merely an acquisition of information, but a development of mind and character and a guide through life; holding this view, we regard religion to be an essential factor in education, and in religious teaching we desire that the child should be taught that he is a member of a community, of a Church, Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Scotch, of a Nonconformist society, or of that larger community the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world. But it is not enough that the child should regard himself as a member of a society with conditions of admission and with a standard which he must maintain. And this is why Churchmen are not satisfied with the Bible story interpreted by the teacher, with such explanations as his knowledge or inclination may supply; they wish the Bible to be used as the foundation and authority for the simple formularies, and liturgy of the Church, for the Catechism and Prayer Book. Now, the Bill excludes all this teaching from all schools except such as were voluntary schools and allow it there only permissively on certain days, out of school hours, at the cost of the denomination and from teachers not on the staff of the school. Those who care for this sort of teaching regard it as of supreme importance, not as an "extra" to be taken up at odd times like woodwork and cookery. And for this reason the proposal to allow more ample denominational teaching where a four-fifths majority demand it seems wholly to misconceive the requirements of the denominations. No doubt the proposal is designed to meet the needs of a Roman Catholic population in large towns, but I doubt if it will be satisfactory to them. The parent may say, "You take my children from me during the best of their waking hours and in some of the most important years of their lives for what you are pleased to call their education. I am entitled to ask that what I regard as of supreme importance should be taught to them, and that its teaching should not depend on the accident of the children forming part of a four-fifths majority of the school." In cases where health was concerned you would not wait till a certain number of children were ill before you sent for the doctor. Why then should you require this numerical proportion in matters which we regard as equally important with health? Now, the great objections to this scheme of religious education are, first, that one sort of religious teaching and one only is permitted and provided out of public funds, and, second, that while all schools are made council schools equal access is not given to definite religious teaching in all. These are some of the objections which I see to the way in which the alleged difficulty is to be solved, but is there a difficulty at all? Is not the Act working well throughout the country? Only in Wales and the West Riding, where the strongest political influence has been brought to bear to impede its working, has any difficulty arisen. To turn to the practical working of the religious instruction given in the voluntary schools, can the President of the Board of Education state that he knows of a single case of conscience wounded or injustice done? I may state my own experience. I held office in rather troubled times when the Act was coming into operation, when there was suspicion as to its working in the minds of many who afterwards accepted it cordially. Every tremor of an irritable conscience or anxious susceptibility vibrated to Whitehall—was communicated to me, and I can say that I spared no pains to investigate every alleged grievance. I left off with a feeling of wonder at the breadth of imagination and of pity for the depth of credulity of my countrymen. But on this point there is no better evidence than that of the teachers, and no more authentic expression of the teachers' views than is to be found in the *Schoolmaster*, a paper certainly not under Unionist influence. I read in this *Schoolmaster* for 2nd December, 1905—

> "Now practically every teacher will tell you what is quite true, namely, that there is no religious difficulty in the schools. And many a teacher will proceed at once and with some show of justifiable irritation at the evil inflicted on educational progress by all this barren conflict, to ask with Lord Brougham 'Why can't you let it alone?' Well, why not? Because—the writer goes on to say—a considerable portion of the community feel that undue preference has been shown to the Established Church as against Nonconformists, and educational progress cannot be secured while conscience remains anywhere affronted."

Here is admittedly no grievance, no difficulty, only a fancied affront to conscience—I suppose to the Nonconformist conscience. Is there no other conscience known to the moral law? Is there nothing in the proposed Bill which will affront the Roman Catholic conscience, the Anglican conscience? I do not know how the Roman Catholics, who have made such sacrifices to maintain their schools, may feel, but I know that there are many of my own Church who have no desire to proselytise or to affront the conscience of any, but whose own consciences would not be easy unless they secured certain things in the schools. They ask for religious teaching for all, and for denominational religious teaching for all whose parents desire it, that it should be given in school hours, that a resonable time should be allowed for it, and that it should be given by teachers who could give it whole-heartedly and with conviction.

I say that the Church is entitled to demand this on several grounds. A series of Statutes from 1870 onward have encouraged the Church to go on with the provision of schools, in the full assurance that the religious character of the teaching in those schools would be maintained. On the faith of this Parliamentary guarantee thousands of schools have been built and millions of money expended. But beyond this, there is the duty and responsibility resting on the clergy and laity of the Church, to see to it that the children whose parents desire it, obtain the teaching of the Church into which they are born. I know that the right hon. Gentleman desires a settlement on equitable lines, and I, too, earnestly desire such a settlement; but no settlement will be final which is not based on a tolerance by all denominations of each other's religious convictions. You cannot settle this matter by driving out one sort of religious teaching from the schools and establishing another; and unless this equitable tolerance possesses the mind of the Government, the passage of this Bill through the House will be troubled and stormy; if it becomes law it will bear bitter fruit in difficulties of administration and our hopes of educational peace will be postponed for years, if not for a generation.

*MR. MASTERMAN (West Ham, N.): It is with considerable regret that in a maiden speech I rise to oppose a proposal of this Government; a Government which I desire loyally to support and from which we have such high hopes of reform. I would like to think myself included among the Members referred to by the right hon. Gentleman who take an interest in education for its own sake. At least I would like to hope that I am not to be included among those who envy the Minister of Education his present position. I recognise the enormous difficulties with which he is confronted, and would wish to pay a tribute of respect to the way in which he is endeavouring to cope with those difficulties. I think, however, the solution he proposes is in some respects an impossible one. We are all grateful to the Minister of Education for having taken the bold step of having a unified system of education, and for abolishing tests for teachers, and also for abolishing this queer unpopular control which was established over half the schools of the country in 1902. I wish, however, that in the measure which he proposes he would go a step farther and say that the non-provided school should come under the same system as the provided school, and that whatever is offered to the one shall be offered to the other. The right hon. Gentleman has offered two different solutions of the religious question as applying to two different schools in the same area. In one village, which is given up to one system on two days a week, opportunities are to be given for denominational teaching, but in other villages, under a different system, no such opportunities are afforded. I do not see why the privilege which is given to one should not be given to the other. I think that principal clause of the Bill will be received with practically unanimous approval on this side of the House. I should have liked to have heard a fuller explanation about the educational as apart from the religious side of education. Take the case of the necessitous districts. Some of us have been looking forward to a remedy for the condition of things in some of our poorer city districts, which has become intolerable. I believe I represent about the worst of those districts at the present time. My hon. friend the Member for Preston informed the House, last week—a House I hope incredulous—that the Empire could get on very well without West Ham. Lord Curzon repeated in substance the same assertion. I am sure my hon. friend the Member for South West Ham will agree with me in saying that it is inconceivable for the Empire to get on without West Ham. But if the Education rate continues to rise from 3s.4d. in the pound the British Empire will have to get on without West Ham; because the prosperous or rather unprosperous denizens of that community will pack up their household goods and flee away, leaving a large tract of bankrupt marsh land untenanted. It is very curious that the districts which contain all the problems of poverty, overcrowding, and unemployment are just those which have to bear this enormous burden. It appears to be an attempt to carry out the Scriptural injunction—

> "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have."

I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will give us some hope in the future that there are one or two questions which educationalists may be allowed to advance in connection with this Bill. One of those questions is secondary education, upon which the Minister for Education did not touch. We earnestly hope that secondary education will receive some assistance from this Bill. Then there is the question of the medical inspection of school children. This movement has been started in a spasmodic random way by a few local authorities, but many of us would like to see it made systematically at the national charge.

As to the religious question, I do not believe that the scheme outlined by the right hon. Gentleman, honest as we know it to be, will do anything to stifle the fires of religious controversy which are raging in this country at the present moment. It is my wish to see placed before the country some scheme which shall prove to be a fair and final settlement. The right hon. Gentleman under the Bill is not going to offer subsidies to every religious creed. He is only going to offer a subsidy to one. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about the conscience which had been manifested in this religious controversy, and said it was no use going against the conscience of any large section of the religious community. I fail to see how his scheme can help going against the conscience of a large section of the religious community. We tacked enormously to one side in 1902, and now we are going to tack too far on the other side in 1906. This will not bring us into our desired haven. There is only one solution of the religious difficulty and that is that the State should subsidise no form of religion. We cannot get the religious communities of this country to agree upon any common form of religious belief to be taught to little children; and even if we could do that I do not know by what right those who do not accept any form of Christianity should be compelled by us to accept such a form of religious belief. Then we have to deal with those who are known as passive resisters. I am not a passive resister myself. If I were once to examine the various things to which I am compelled to contribute in rates and taxes I should find myself conscientiously resisting most of them. But the passive resister has maintained in difficulty, despite ridicule and inconvenience, in and out of season his view; and the general election has shown him to be triumphant. And these passive resisters have laid down one clear principle—that the State shall pay for no creed that can offend any man's conscience. I say that it is a dangerous position for the State to be attached to any form of belief which is incompatible with the conscience of any one of its citizens. It is a position which in this House no doubt we may put lightly aside as in 1902. But it will afford no settlement of the question. It will lead to a rekindling of the fires of religious controversy which it is the object of every man on this side as well as on the other side of the House to allay. The right hon. Gentleman made a strong appeal for this particular form of Bible teaching, and he told us that the system had worked well because parents had rarely withdrawn their children. Later on, however, he explained why parents did not withdraw their children. The mandate we have received from the country was not to enforce any particular kind of religious teaching. All the arguments I have heard—and I have heard a good many—as to what is called secular instruction never being tolerated by the people of this country, seem to me to bear a strong resemblance to the arguments used in 1902, and again the other day on the question of Chinese labour. There has been no referendum on this subject. The new scheme does not accept the decision of the local authority on the matter of religious teaching. As I understand, the local authority in Scotland can decide to give religious teaching in conformity with the desires of the people of the locality. That is not offered by this Bill. The people are allowed to choose religion if they like, but only one form of religion. If they wish to choose another they must pay for it. It is only the religion endowed by the State that is to be free. That is playing with the dice loaded. I do not know, but I do not think that the majority of the Members of this House went to their constituents and asked them to record their votes in favour of this particular religion being taught universally in the schools. I admit that in my innocence I exhibited "Religious Equality" on my posters. I shall hereafter have to explain that that was a "terminological inexactitude." I am afraid we shall all have a great many of these terminological inexactitudes to explain. I explained also at every meeting that I would vote for no form of religion being taught by the State. And I found members of all religions, and men of no religion, Churchmen, Nonconformists, atheists, agnostics, all agreeing with me that that was the only satisfactory solution. It is the solution to which this country must come sooner or later. If that be so, why cannot we have it sooner? I venture to make a last appeal to the right hon. Gentleman that we may be allowed on this particular question to vote according to our own convictions. I am quite convinced that if the challenge is fairly offered to us, as to whether we will vote for this change in this Bill or for the destruction of the Government, rather than place hon. Gentlemen opposite in power most Members on this side of the House would vote for any religion to be taught in the schools. I am, I believe, right in saying that the first time this question was raised in 1870, when the first step was taken in this wearisome progress towards a rational system of education, this House was allowed to decide for itself what its opinion was. I do not want the Government to throw the Bill to the wolves and to take no responsibility at all. I want the Government to recognise that this is a matter of conscience and to let us vote according to our consciences. If the right hon. Gentleman does that we may be able to do something to try and damp down those fires which have already been ignited by the telegrams sent out with reference to his speech this evening. On this question some of us, above all, desire peace. We are sick of this theological controversy which has whirled and eddied round the heads of the unfortunate children in our schools for so many months and years. We wish to end the scandal that in a world slowly turning its face away from all definite religion, the forces of Christianity of this country are engaged not in fighting against the common enemy of ignorance and wrongdoing, but in a passionate internecine civil war each against the other. If one-tenth, if one-hundredth part of the energy expended in this civil warfare in the last five or six years had been devoted to the work of social amelioration how far, how enviably far we should have advanced along the path of progress. We desire, above all things, peace. We can see no way to peace at all except by a settlement which all consider just. And we can see no way by which such just settlement can be arrived at except by the State definitely declaring that all religious teaching shall be outside the curriculum and not paid for by public funds. Let the State say to the churches: "You have not decided on some common form of teaching; until you have decided on some common form of teaching we will give every facility outside the schools; but we will keep our schools unified inside, and we cannot pay for such teaching." That is the only settlement which is just, practical and final. Mr. Speaker, I must through you thank the House most sincerely for the way in which it has listened to perhaps somewhat uncongenial statements, and implore those who may sympathise with us to consider whether some such settlement as that which I have indicated would not after all be worthy of the great mandate that has been given to this Parliament of reform.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I rise for the purpose of making a few observations upon this Bill on behalf of the hon. Members with whom I am associated. The Labour Party approaches the educational problem pretty much from the same point of view as that of the hon. Member for West Ham North. We wish for sectarian peace in order that we may have the educational progress we desire. We welcome the statements that have been made by the right hon. Gentleman on one or two special grounds. We welcome devolution. A great many of us were never in favour of the abolition of school boards, and I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in his Bill there are any special provisions for London. I venture to hope that he will go further, so far as London is concerned, than he is prepared to go in other parts of the country, in applying the principles of devolution. I venture to think that until London has once more an educational authority directly responsible to the ratepayers the education of London cannot be rescued from the hands of the clerk and the official. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman also whether he proposes to apply this Bill to Scotland or Ireland, and whether there is any provision in the Bill to enable local education authorities to provide for medical attendance on a much more ample and satisfactory scale in the direction of under-fed and neglected school children? There is another point upon which the Labour Party is particularly interested, and that is that there should be much more satisfactory provision for training colleges for teachers. Such a provision, I suppose, is outside the scope of this Bill, but we should like to know that definitely. We welcome the abolition of non-provided schools and the religious test for teachers, though we regret that by a back-door that test is reimposed.

The debate, so far, must have convinced the right hon. Gentleman that his attempt to allay sectarian strife has failed. I have not the least doubt but that he honestly made the attempt. No one who knows the right hon. Gentleman would doubt that for a moment. But in this respect at the time when, as the responsible Minister, he proposes to sweep into the net of the State practically the whole of the elementary education of the country he has got to begin his task anew. We do not propose at this stage of the Bill to discuss in detail our objections to this particular proposal of the Bill, but at a later stage we shall ask the House to divide upon this question. Although I have not the honour to be formally or officially associated with the Party in power the right hon. Gentleman will not resent my appealing to him to allow this question to be settled according to the convictions of the House and not to throw the weight of the Government into the division. We concur with speakers on both sides of the House in considering that the arrangements made in this Bill will not settle sectarian strife. We do not accept the clauses dealing with religious education that have been foreshadowed in the right hon. Gentleman's speech. Surely it is perfectly evident when he speaks about non-sectarian, undenominational, or Bible-reading education—I do not care which expression he accepts as being the least offensive—when he talks about that, surely he must remember that there are large and important sections, even although they be not majorities, who do not accept that Bible reading education, because they consider that it is a form of denominationalism. In this matter the Roman Catholic minority has as much right to be heard in this House as a Nonconformist majority, or a Church of England majority. A very influential section of the Church of England itself refuses to regard that form of religious instruction as being undenominational. It tells us that that form of Bible reading, with the offering of a very simple prayer or the singing of a simple hymn, is rank Nonconformity, naked and unashamed, preached to the children. I am not saying that I agree with that. All I am concerned in pointing out to this House is that there is a section of the Church of England that says so, and we are bound to consider the conscientious convictions of a minority. But there are a great many of us who do not say these things, and who do not believe in these things, and who do not side with those sections. There are a great many of us who regard with profound regret the movement, which I am afraid is only too apparent in our public life—the movement of the people, turning their faces away from real genuine spiritual religion. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has not courageously eliminated all this sort of sectarian and religious education so-called from his curriculum, because I put down to this mere formal skeleton of instruction in religion a very large amount of our falling from religious grace at the present moment. I oppose it not because I am a secularist, because I am not, and not because I am a Roman Catholic or a High Churchman, but because I feel the very greatest sorrow and grief when I find that religion is becoming so much a formal affair, so much a thing of the lips, so much a thing of mere outward conduct, and so little of the real spirit. I oppose any attempt to teach this skeleton of religion in the name of religion, and to bolster up the idea that it is going to secure our children in their allegiance to a religious creed, or to a church, or to a chapel, or to religion in any shape, form or method of expression. It is straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Our opposition to this teaching is that from the point of view of its moral and spiritual results the so-called religious instruction which is being given in our schools has up to now been practically barren. It has had a certain disciplinary effect. Everyone who has served on a board of managers, as I have, or has taken part in the teaching staff of schools as I have, will undoubtedly admit that this religious instruction has had a sort of disciplinary effect, but as a religious effect it has had practically none whatever.

I would like to put one or two further questions to the right hon. Gentleman. He has told us that non-provided schools are now to be taken over by the public education authorities and to be used for elementary purposes for some consideration which he has not disclosed. I should like to ask if the Education Department are going to lay down the basis of valuation, that is, to determine the value of the consideration to be paid for those schools which are transferred for special purposes from the trustees to the public education authorities. I should like to ask whether the Education Department will revise these bargains, and whether they will sanction them before they become operative and effective. He also foreshadowed that the trustees who hold these schools now, would on Saturdays and Sundays use them for any purposes they liked. That is what I gathered, but I do not know if I understood my right hon. friend rightly or not. I should like to ask, supplementary to that, whether the public, who are going to maintain the fabric altogether, are also going to have corresponding rights with the trustees? We know, as a matter of fact, that these schools are very often refused to us at times. Those who have been engaged in social work—entertainments for a charitable or philanthropic purpose, but mainly for the purposes of alleviating the condition of the district in which the schools are supported—have had to abandon many schemes because the rents charged for these public places are extravagantly high. That indicates the difficulty I have in my mind, and I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he proposes to give us—the public—a share in the facilities which he proposes to hand over to the original trustees of the buildings? I am sure the hon. Gentlemen who are associated with me agree with me in this matter. I do not believe for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman is going to bring peace by his four-fifths proposal. I cannot contemplate the working of the proposal. It may be that when we see the Bill some of our differences will be removed, but I am bound to say that, having followed the right hon. Gentleman as closely as I possibly could, and having attempted to make definite in my own mind the actual administration of the general proposals which he made to the House, the only effect that I can see that is certain to arise out of this proposal is a recrudescence of sectarian strife upon the field of municipal politics. There is a great deal to be said against the school board system because it invited the continuance of religious strife. I am afraid that this makes the same mistake as certain provisions constituting the school boards made. I cannot imagine anything that can be more provocative of religious strife than that the local education authority should sit down and consider schools to be handed over to sects by ear-marking the teaching. I think it would be simply to divide Nonconformists from Conformists, Roman Catholics from English Catholics, and all the various sects which have for so long been accustomed to range themselves one on one side of public life and one on the other. Moreover, what does the passive resister say to this? The position is much worse for him than it was before, because, so far as I can understand it, the fabric of these schools is to be maintained wholly out of the rates. The education is to be wholly denominational education. Not only as a matter of religion, not merely as a matter of making comments on the Catechism and the Prayer Book, but also, I understand, histories are to be taught to present certain religious views. There are Protestant histories and Catholic histories, and all this is going to be done out of the rates. Yet we are told that the Passive Resistance movement is going to be brought to an end. As a matter of fact, the position is much worse for the conscientious objector under the new proposals than it is under the present Act. That is how it seems to me at any rate, and I am sure if I am wrong the right hon. Gentleman will correct me. Then the teachers themselves are bound to be denominational. You are going to create a new class of denominational teacher. The teachers in the schools are to be pledged to denominational tests. [Cries of "No."] Well, if anybody has had any experience as a member of a board of managers of a non-provided school he must know that one is bound under such conditions to have denominational teachers. Since the year 1902 I have been a manager of a non-provided school, and it is perfectly evident to anyone who goes to that school day after day, not merely when religious instruction is being given but when ordinary instruction is being given, that the school with its pictures, with its whole atmosphere, and with the comments that are being made by the teachers upon history, or when ordinary nature lessons are being taught—apparently simple, undenominational lessons—it is impossible, I say, to go to that school without finding that the general purpose which the school is supposed to serve under the body politic is bound to come out in the teaching. If you are going to have a teacher in any sympathy with you, then it is an insult to a denomination to say that the teachers are not to be denominational. I think it will be a very serious grievance in this House if denominational schools are to be created and are not to be staffed, at any rate, by head-teachers chosen on denominational as well as educational grounds.

I think I have said sufficient to indicate to the House the line that the Labour Members are going to take. I think this whole question of religious instruction is so grave and so serious a matter that the House ought to consider it apart from any other portion of the Bill, as a sort of basis upon which the educational system ought to be built, and we propose to ask you to allow the House to discuss it and to divide upon it. Otherwise, so far as the Bill is a contribution to a more efficient education, so far as it puts the teachers on a better footing, so far as it brings more educational facilities within the reach of the children of the country, we are going to support it right through. Every man who sits in this corner of the House owes his education to an elementary school. There is not a single one of us who has ever been inside the door of a secondary school until able to get there by his own labour enabling him to pay the fees necessary to entitle him to enter the doors of such a school. We represent people whose children have no chance of education except that which is provided by an elementary public school system, and who, if the public school system is imperfect, poor, inadequate, twisted, and dwarfed by sectarian strife, have no other chance of being turned out upon the world as educated citizens. Naturally we take the keenest and the closest interest in this Bill. We will support it as an educational measure, and we shall try to remove those clauses which we think will make strife more bitter than it was before, and which cannot be accepted as a sound basis upon which an educational system may be built.

*DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): What I desire to say must be subject to the fact that I have not seen the text of this measure, but from what I have heard from the right hon. Gentleman I must say that in the main I view this Bill as a very honest, a very skilful and a very painstaking endeavour to solve a very difficult problem. Notwithstanding what has been said by my hon. friend opposite, and by the hon. Member for North West Ham, in its main features I believe the Government will safely bring this Bill into port, but it will depend upon the extent to which the volume of moderate opinion in this House and in the country is able to resist the attacks of extremists from all parts. I propose to comment upon one or two of the main features of this Bill. With regard to the machinery for the local government of education, I lay the greatest stress upon getting the machinery on right lines. We are now giving local education authorities more power, and we shall in time give them more money; therefore it is absolutely necessary that we should get the machinery on right lines to start with. As I gathered from the speech of the President this Bill leaves the machinery substantially where the Bill of 1902 left it. There is a small concession in the way of devolution in the administrative county, but, as the right hon. Gentleman said, substantially he is not prepared to uproot the machinery of 1902. I would remind the House that that machinery swept away the great school board system and handed the work over to the municipal councils. I think that that was a most momentous leap in the dark, and in my opinion in many areas it has been fraught with very grave shortcomings. Take London, for instance; I do not think the House realises what is actually involved in the education of the children of London. In London you have 1,000,000 children and pupils, you have to supervise 20,000 school teachers, and there is an expenditure of £4,000,000 of public money every year upon education. The educational machinery of London is a piece of machinery as big as all the educational system of Scotland, which takes 977 school boards to look after it. It is a piece of machinery three times as big as that which exists for the education of all Wales. What has been the result of the endeavour to hand over the education of London to the London County Council? In the first place there was chaos which would have been absolutely fatal and would have brought them clean on to the rocks had it not been for the exceptional capacity of the old school board officials. The whole system is now entirely run by paid officials. I am not making any comments or criticisms upon the services of the members of the London County Council; but an all wise providence has put a limit even to their capacity, and it is impossible for the London County Council as at present constituted to conduct efficiently London's education. Two years of purely official administration of London has cost £150,000, but at the close of this year it will cost £300,000. In the *Daily News* four days ago the Member for East Islington, who is a most thorough-going Radical and a Progressive member of the London County Council, stated that—

> "At a meeting of the Schools Sub-Committee on July 4th last there were present six members and fifteen paid officials. At the same committee on July 18th there were six elected members attended and twelve officials. On September 26th they required fourteen officials to assist seven members in arriving at their decision, whilst on December 8th a special committee was attended by ten members and thirteen officials."

I have a sincere admiration for the capacity of the London County Council, but I say that this is not conducting London's education on democratic lines. What is true of London is equally true in a lesser degree of some of the great towns in the country, where they have found education entirely beyond them. People do not realise that the education of any area is a problem at least as big in bulk and far more ramified in detail than the whole of the municipal work of that area put together. Therefore, they cannot keep this work in their own hands. In the administrative counties, again, cases arise where the thing is by no means a success. Take, for example, Devonshire.

It is impossible to control education in Torrington in the north and Tamerton in the south from the city of Exeter. Take, as another instance, Glamorganshire. Glamorgan has been saying, since 1902, "We will provide no money unless we have control." See how the thing works out in the county of Glamorgan. There you have an area 900 square miles in extent with 600,000 of a population and 100,000 elementary school children. Here is a minute of a sub-committee upon girls' education dealing with 60,000 girls—

"Present, one member and that a co-opted member."

The decisions were arrived at by this single person whose minutes were passed by the Glamorgan Committee *sub silentio*, and the Glamorgan County Council subsequently confirmed those minutes and they became the finding of a democratic community. Then there is the School Attendance Sub-Committee of the Glamorgan County Council and there the minutes give this entry—

"Present :—Alderman William Llewellyn. Alderman William Llewellyn in the chair."

This thing has been put upon these councils and it is more than they can bear. If I had my way I would adopt the system put forward in 1904–5 for Scotland by the late Government. They took Scotland and divided it into 110 areas, each of a suitable size as regards population. They left eight counties undivided, and divided the others. They left the four great cities undivided, and made 110 areas in all, and in each of them they proposed to elect *ad hoc* school boards with power to supervise the whole of the education within their own areas. I think that would have been the right course for the Government to adopt. Of course, I sympathise with the Government in its disinclination to root up machinery only two years after its installation, and I will not ask them to do so. This is another heritage which has been thrust upon us by the late Government, and we cannot fairly ask the Government in such a short time to root up this machinery. I will, however, ask three things. In the first place, I would suggest that if any locality thinks the present machinery not effective, it shall be empowed to petition Parliament by provisional order for a reversion to the directly elected local authority for education, or if it desires for an increase of its membership of the municipal council to secure that education shall be continued upon democratic lines. In the second place, I would give them power to petition to subdivide areas, and thirdly, any local authority that desires to do so should be empowered by Parliament to pay the travelling expenses of the members of the education committees wherever long distances are involved. So much for the local machinery.

And now let me say a word or two about the dual system of provided and non-provided schools. I do not make any secret of the fact that I rejoice very greatly indeed that the dual system is to disappear. I also rejoice that all schools and all the managers and the teachers are to come entirely under the control of the local authority. That is the inevitable and direct consequence of the Act of 1902. That was a great educational reform inasmuch as it did away with the dangerous anachronism which endeavours to educate half of the children of this country upon charity, and I am glad that education everywhere is now to be a public charge. I remember that Dr. Temple warned the Government as to what would be the sequel to putting the denominational schools upon the slippery slope of the rates. The late Prime Minister provided a Bill which placed eleven-twelfths of the maintenance of denominational schools on public funds, and then he prepared a scheme which reserved eight-twelfths of the management to the trustees of denominational schools. Of course, that system could not be maintained, and the late Prime Minister probably knew it. To-day I rejoice very greatly that the inevitable consequences have arrived, and these schools having been put on public funds must now come entirely under public control. I am glad also that the rental has to come out of the Imperial Exchequer, and that the cost is not thrown upon the ratepayer. The burden of the ratepayer is intolerable already, and as time goes on I feel certain that we shall be compelled to raise a much larger portion of the cost of education from the Imperial Exchequer than we are doing at the present time. Education is an Imperial and not a local service, and therefore a much smaller proportion of the cost ought to be raised from the rates; and even that proportion ought to be raised

Dr. Macnamara.

as the result of a sliding scale which would equalise the amount to be raised in the poorer areas. Finally, on this question of the transfer of the schools let me say how grateful I am on behalf of the school teachers to the right hon. Gentleman for his statement that something will be done in a certain part of the Bill to safeguard the legitimate interests of the teachers whose schools will be transferred under this scheme. It would be a monstrous thing to leave a body of devoted public servants high and dry.

I will refer briefly to the interminable religious difficulty. By transferring the non-provided schools to the local authority all schools *ipso facto* become Cowper Temple schools. I do not think my hon. friend the Member for North West Ham understands at all what that means. If he does he would not have made the speech that he has made. What does it mean that these schools will become Cowper Temple schools? I speak of the hon. Member as a high denominationalist. [Mr. MASTERMAN dissented.] I cannot classify him readily enough for my purpose now, so I will leave him unclassified. High denominationalists say that it means thrusting the Bible willingly or unwillingly on everybody. My hon. friend the Member for Leicester put it in that way. It does nothing of the sort. That is entirely a mistake. I would not be here speaking up for it if it does. They say, "You must not thrust the Bible as the Cowper Temple clause does upon everybody, because that is endowing the denominationalism of nonconformity; and if you endow the denominationalism of nonconformity you must endow our denominationalism too." This is a very fallacious and quite a mistaken idea of the case. What does the Cowper Temple clause do? It is the widest form of local option. In the first place it thrusts nothing on anybody. It is left to the local authority to say whether there shall be any religious teaching or not. If it agrees that there shall be no religious teaching, there will not be any. My hon. friend the Member for North West Ham has got to go down there and convert his own people. Therefore, there is no compulsion. It is a matter for the local authority. In the second place if we decide for religious instruction this instruction must not contain, as the President of the Board of Education has already advised us, any catechism or formulary distinctive of any particular denomination. It must be confined to simple Bible teaching. That is not all. In the third place, a parent can by verbal request have his child withdrawn from this undenominational Bible teaching, and the local authority is bound to provide secular instruction for the child during the time. In the fourth place the parent can send a written demand to keep his child away from the religious instruction altogether up till now, and send him somewhere else for religious instruction; but I understand that from this time forward a parent can keep his child at home and need not give the guarantee he has had to give up to now as to what the child is doing during the hours of religious instruction. What more is wanted in the name of religious liberty than a system like this? I will appeal to the different Parties in this matter not to push their irritating desire for a logical settlement. They are the slaves of mere logic and I will appeal to them not to push their desire to such an extent as might make it impossible for the local authority to give Bible instruction if they think that is the sentiment of the people of the locality. I will appeal to the high denominationalists not to make a coalition with the secularists, because that would end in the Bible being pushed out of the schools, and I think that would be disastrous. I want my children to be taught the Bible. I think the elements of the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible sweeten and beautify life, and for this reason I desire this for my children, although I will thrust it upon nobody else. The real difficulty of the situation before us is the possible coalition of those who cannot get all their own way in the matter of dry logic with those who are distinctly against religious teaching and who will lightly indeed push the Bible out of the schools. That will be disastrous. The Bill extends the Cowper Temple system in the direction of giving facilities for specific denominational teaching outside the hours of the time-table and outside the auspices of the public authority by volunteer teachers, and in connection with which no compulsory attendance can be secured. With this I associate myself most cordially, and I think I may say I associate myself with the four-fifths proportion, although there is one point on which I am in doubt. I understand that in populous and urban areas where the four-fifths demand for facilities is to come into force the State teacher will be allowed to become the volunteer denominational teacher. I hope in this case nothing in the nature of a creed test will arise at the time of his appointment. I quite understand that circumstances are changed, and that now the local authority will appoint him and not the managers. The trustees will not necessarily be managers, and therefore the persons who will ask him to do this will not be persons who will prejudice his office or inflict any disability upon him. So far so good. I think it may be possible to run this scheme without imposing a creed test on the teacher. But there is a curious discrimination unless I am much mistaken. In all the other cases except the four-fifths schools in towns and populous districts the State school teacher is not to be allowed to volunteer whether he likes or not. I am not going to express an opinion on this, because I am in conflict with some of my personal associates regarding it, beyond saying that it is a curious discrimination. I hope we will be able to go into this more fully on another stage of the Bill. I foresee another difficulty. The State teacher or the Cowper Temple teacher, as I will call him, will in that case have the giving of religious teaching as part of his ordinary duty. He will be paid by the local authority; but, in the case where he is willing to become the denominational volunteer teacher, trustees who may have a large sum of money at their disposal from rental will be in a position to ask him to undertake the volunteer teaching and pay him a considerable sum in addition to his State school salary. I rather think that will give a very unfair preference to denominational teaching, but I will raise the question at the proper time.

As I rejoice in the abolition of the dual system bringing the managers and teachers of non-provided schools under the public authority, so I rejoice in the abolition of creed tests for teachers. So long as we were willing to superadd a voluntary contribution to the teachers' salary we were entitled to ask some qualification beyond that imposed by the public authority, but the moment we put the whole of the denominational teachers upon the public funds for every single farthing of their salaries we are bound to render them immune from theological tests. I notice with some concern that my right hon. friend made no reference to training colleges. I do not think it does much good abolishing religious tests if we do not deal with the question of training colleges. It is the fact that many young people desire to go to residential colleges where they get the domestic life, but four-fifths of the places in these training colleges are reserved for members of the Church of England. I have known, and it is the greatest scandal, within my own personal history again and again a young person who has won a King's Scholarship at the end of six years' apprenticeship and become entitled to go to a training college, and who was only able to utilise it by becoming a confirmed member of the Church of England and a communicant; and then he would change his religion immediately he had done his two years training. That need not be challenged. It may be taken from me that it has happened, and I say that it is a great scandal, and no young person should be subject to a test of this sort after having won a scholarship. I do not wish to press the matter at the present juncture, but I submit that if under this new system, which I cordially approve, and which I shall strongly support both in the House and in the country, we are going to continue to give State aid to denominational training colleges, then no King's scholar can possibly be refused admission on the ground of his religious belief. That seems to me to arise distinctly from the proposal to abolish religious tests for teachers. I sit down as other Members have done with an appeal to the House to discuss this difficult problem without passion and without sectarian bitterness. I have some little claim to make that appeal. I certainly added to the wearisomeness of the debates of 1902, but I never consciously added to the bitterness of those debates. Early in those debates I received, signed by I think every one or nearly every one of the nonconformist ministers in North Camberwell, a respectful, still, very firmly-worded protest that I was not attacking the Bill of 1902 with anything like the vigorous strenuousness they thought I ought to do. That is the nonconformist attitude towards my policy. As to the Church of England, I believe I am suspect in North Camberwell by the leaders of the Church, and I rather fancy there are some of them who think I am a pestilent fellow whom they would not trust with their cash boxes. In the last election a certain estimable gentleman doing good work amongst the poor in North Camberwell, a Roman Catholic priest, felt constrained by his conscience to go into the houses of the Irish section and take my portrait out of the windows and consign it to the flames, no doubt piously regretting that the time had gone past when he could consign me with it. That represents the Roman Catholic attitude. Sir, that is my claim to speak as a simple-minded impartial educationalist. In this capacity I appeal to the House to call a truce of God upon this unhappy problem. Let us get on with the work so that the children in the schools to-day, and the citizens of to-morrow, may adequately steward the great national heritage which in due course will fall into their safe keeping.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): The form of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was, as we should have expected, polished and, I would add, polite; but the substance of it lacked, I think, something of that genial urbanity which we always associate with the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps that is inherent in the nature of his task. He had to put forward proposals which he knew must be distasteful to many of those who sit opposite to him; but he was unable, perhaps in his desire for brevity, to speak one word of tribute to the zeal which has been displayed and the sacrifices which have been made by certain sections of the community on behalf of the community. Those sections are the very sections who are bound to be displeased with the measure which His Majesty's Ministers have thought it their duty to submit to Parliament. The first observation I have to make on the Bill as explained is that it is not an Education Bill. There is no urgency for an amendment of the Act of 1902 so far as secular education is concerned. The Bill is simply a measure for regulating and modifying the extent to which, and the conditions under which, religious education is to be given in our public elementary schools. I am emboldened in making that statement because I have in my mind the deliberate and considered opinion of the gentleman who was Chairman of the Technical Education Committee of the London County Council. That gentleman's views were published in a book in 1904, in which he stated that as regarded voluntary schools the Acts of 1902–3 were not meant to create nor to alter the existing diversity, nor to establish any new test educationally. I am the last man to say that these Acts are not capable of amendment, even of large amendment; but this Bill is not an Education Bill. It is simply a measure for regulating and modifying the extent to which and the conditions under which religious education is to be given in our public elementary schools. How much of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was devoted to advocating what I can call the imposition, with a certain limited exception, of one form of religious education throughout the country? And the exception seemed to me to be not only limited, but arbitrary and invidious. In the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman charged some of us, or some of those who agree with us, with having spoken slightingly of the religious education given in the provided schools, and which was given in the old board schools. In all I have to say I shall refrain from using one word which could hurt the feelings of anyone who has taken part in this controversy, but I am entitled to say, and it is my duty to say, speaking for most of my hon. friends, and certainly for considerable sections of the community, that the provision of religious education which now exists in the provided schools is in their opinion inadequate, and therefore unsatisfactory. I am very far indeed from deriding what is called moral instruction that is divorced from religious education; but I do not think it is enough, and millions of people in the country share that view. Yet in the Bill it is to be optional to any county council to give no religious education at all except moral instruction—the mere inculcation of laudable sentiments. One of the original founders of non-provided schools said that sentiment was but the wing of the soul, but what is the soul to do when that wing is tired? It is to be optional to the county council to say that the Bible is to be read and that no word of comment shall be made upon it. That is good as far as it goes, but will anybody contend that it goes far enough for millions in this country? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] So long as broadly throughout the land there is another system of education people are not called upon to resent provisions which they think inadequate. Many children in our large cities may easily be overlooked by the ministers of all religious persuasions, however earnest, but they can hardly escape hearing or reading direct attacks upon the Bible. The child would be lucky if it was only led to believe that the Bible is a collection of books reflecting the philosophy and thought of the time—lucky if it is not poisoned with doctrines inimical to all religion. Under this Bill the facilities for correcting such influences as these are cut down. I shall refrain from criticising the religious instruction given in provided schools; I will not call it board school religion, or apply opprobrious epithets to it. It is usually referred to as teaching the fundamental truths of Christianity, or as giving undenominational instruction. Well, that does not meet the justice of the case. Mankind hitherto has failed to teach such fundamental truths without defining them and drawing deductions therefrom, and the deductions are the creeds round which all these battles rage. People think that religious instruction should be given through those creeds; and we cannot evade the difficulty that people in England are sharply and even passionately divided on the question of what religious instruction should be given to their children by saying that what is common to all the creeds should be taught. Members of the Church of England have claims which they think are reasonable, and which ought to be considered in any measure brought forward by the Government. Churchmen claim that the children of Church parents shall, when their parents so desire, have the Bible explained to them by persons who are able to teach conscientiously the Christian faith as it is held by the Church of England. We ask for liberty of conscience in this matter, and it is an abominable injustice to deny to parents such measure of freedom. I should have thought that those who claim to be the political successors of Cromwell would have been better able to understand what toleration meant. Cromwell said—

> "In things of the mind we look for no compulsion except of reason."

I admit that Cromwell was not very consistent, notably in the case of Ireland. He granted toleration to all Protestant denominations except Anglicanism. That was not bad in the 17th century; but this is the 20th century, and we might expect some advance Yet in this Bill, for the first time in the history of our country for many decades past, the State makes it its business to say what form of religion shall have the advantage in this country. That is the vital defect of the Bill. The State having made education compulsory, we claim two things. The State is bound to give facilities for religious education in constant, close, and convenient connection with secular education. We claim, in the second place, that the State shall not show favour to any one form of religious education. The State has not done so until this day. I declare that the State has not gone out of its way in any of the Education Acts of the last century to give a deliberate advantage to any one denomination. The State showed no preference, in the early years of the century, between the British and Foreign Society, in favour of undenominational education, and the National Society, in favour of denominational education. In the Education Act of 1870 the State still kept the balance, although I do not say they held the right balance. Some people may think it went one way and other people may think it went another. Mr. Forster is represented in his "Life" by Sir Wemyss Reid as saying that he would expose himself to any political fate rather than crush out the voluntary schools or handicap them unfairly as against the undenominational schools which were about to be created. Again, under the Act of 1902 the State tried, and as I believe succeeded, in acting fairly between the two views. Under Clause 9 of that Act the State took care of the future as well as of the present, and stated that having regard to the efficiency of education and the burden on the rates regard was also to be had to the views of the parents in respect of the education of their children. It stated that it was open to any parents of whatever religious faith, in any district, who felt that there was no school accomodation for their children, to have a new school built and to get for it equal treatment from the State. Sir, this measure, as proposed to-day in Parliament, marks a great departure from anything which the State has attempted to do in this country for many generations. I should be misunderstood if I were understood to say that the Act of 1902 gave absolute justice in all places; but I say it gives rough and ready justice, if you look at the country as a whole. Justice in some places, Wales for example, rough and not very ready so far as the Nonconformists are concerned. In the midland districts, also in the great industrial centres, justice rough and not very ready. Then why not seek to amend the Act of 1902 in that respect, and give justice to all parts of the country, so far as it could be given by Clause 9? The Government have not attempted to amend Clause 9. They have torn up Clause 9, and have said: "In future no regard shall be had to the needs of the Church in the industrial centres."

Let me say a word as to the facilities offered to the voluntary schools in the country. No matter how much money has been found for the institution of such schools, no matter how clear the trust deed may be as to the particular denominational education to be given in those schools, those who are now the trustees must either abandon the sacrifices that have been made in the past, or in order to get the pittance of two mornings in each week for religious education, must strike any bargain they can. That is one facility. Now look at the other facilities which are confined to towns only, or to populous districts. Only where the parents of four-fifths of the children of a school desire, shall denominational education be given in the future as in the past, and only then in a school which has been a denominational school. Is there to be no room for future extension of the legitimate desires of the Anglican churchmen, the Roman Catholics, and the Jews? That facility is to be denied them. This iron pressure is to be put upon this country to endeavour to mould it into one form of religion. That pressure is being put on by the Government of the day. The Anglican Church asks no less resolutely than do the Nonconformists and the Jews that in future her children may be brought up in accordance with the creed it is her duty to teach. I have refrained from criticising the religious education that has been given in the past and is now being given in private schools. It is enough to say that, according to the conscience of the vast number of people in this country, according to the vast majority of those who are not members of the Church of England, the religious education is inadequate and unsatisfactory. But whatever we may think, rightly or wrongly, of the religious education which it is now proposed to impose, the *gravamen* of our objection is that it is the State which is seeking to impose it. To that extent this Bill is a new Act of Supremacy, and, with the exception of the limited and arbitrary means of escape which it proposes, the Bill is also an Act of Uniformity. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware of it or not, but the Government are resuming the task of the Tudors and the Stuarts. They are seeking once more to subordinate the religion of individual citizens to the supposed needs of national policy and to the convenience of the servants of the State. The proposed pains and penalties, I admit as we must all admit, are lighter than those of centuries ago. But they are substantial. The diversion of school fabrics from the purposes to which they were dedicated by trusts, some measure of confiscation, the infliction of special burdens, the offering of special privileges by a dodge—these are the special pains and penalties which the Government are imposing upon all those who care for the denominational education which they think their children ought to have. The pains and penalties are lighter than those in the days of open intolerance and naked persecution. The barbarity of the proceeding is abolished, but its injustice is undiminished. Against that injustice we now protest, and on every succeeding stage of the Bill we shall spare no efforts to avert that injustice in this Parliament; and if we fail in this Parliament, in the next we are determined to see that it is redressed.

MR. WALTERS (Sheffield, Brightside): I desire in a few words to express the heartiness with which I welcome this Bill. I like it because it simplifies very much the local administration, and it simplifies it in the best way. We are now to have only one class of schools. Those engaged in practical educational work know how much difficulty now exists in dealing with the two types of school that we have at present. That will pass away, and the local authority will be able to deal directly with all the teachers and the administrative work. The discussion to-day has centred round the religious question, with regard to which we are in a rather curious position. For in this matter we have two Parties who desire two diametrically opposite conditions. Many of those who object to denominational instruction, curiously enough, go to the opposite extreme. They say that because you cannot offer them every phase and form of denominational instruction they will have no religion at all, and they declare that because they cannot have denominationalism they must have secular instruction only. I think it is about time that we considered what is the opinion of the parents of the children upon this question. Do the electors who sent us here ask only for one of these two alternatives—either give us denominationalism or give us no religion at all? I venture to say that anyone who is closely connected with the work of education, and comes into contact with the parents of children, will find that they do not take either of those extreme positions. They take a much more moderate and commonsense view. They do not ask that their children should be made into theologians, and they do not want them to be taught all those subtle distinctions of creeds and dogmas which, if you polled the country, you would find that 90 per cent. of the parents reject, asking for simple Bible teaching in the schools. It is all very well for hon. Members to say that if you cannot have this you must have that, or you must have no religion in the schools. We have to deal with the ordinary common practical application of these views in the educational world, and we have to consider what it is that the parents really want. I think the popularity of the council schools is very clearly demonstrated by what has taken place during the last two or three years. Do the people want denominational instruction or the simple Bible instruction of the council schools? Look at the record of school buildings since the Act of 1902 was passed. All over the country council schools are being built, and compared with them the number of denominational schools that have been built in the same period is entirely insignificant. That means that the parents of the children like the type of instruction which is given in those schools, and they like simple Bible instruction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said that the religious instruction given in the council schools was inadequate. But what standard has been set up? We admit frankly that no elaborate theological system is taught in those schools, and we are thankful that that is the case. It must be remembered that we are dealing with small children of eight, nine, ten, and eleven years of age, and we do not want a theological system. All we want is a simple basis of religious instruction upon which the various denominations may work their own superstructure. I could understand the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite if we were teaching anything in the council schools inconsistent with or hostile to any great Church in this country, but no such objection is made. You say that this is not enough, and that it is inadequate. You do not say that we are teaching heresy or schism, or laying a foundation upon which they cannot build. Therefore the practical common sense of the average person comes to this: "I do not want my small boy or girl taught any particular dogmas, doctrines, or creeds; I want them to have simple religious instruction that shall be the basis of morality and decent, sober, upright life." I think if we can give them that in the council schools, we are giving what the parents want. Is it not quite illogical to take up one of those opposite extremes? My hon. friend said that if you do not have every kind, you must have none. Is that logical? I suggest that if you allow discretion to your local education committees, and let them decide what shall be the basis of the instruction, that is a perfectly sound, fair, and logical position to take up. If we were to adopt the views put forward in favour of secular instruction only, and which have been advanced here to-night, if an indication went forth of that kind, I think that amongst the vast majority of the electorate there would be unrest and the profoundest dissatisfaction. Wherever I went during the election, I found that the people mostly desired to have simple Biblical instruction. It is no use trying to push these academic arguments too far. I feel quite satisfied that if we consulted the parents of the children we should find that they are not for secularism and not in favour of denominationalism, but that what they want is a simple practical Christianity based upon the Bible that would be the foundation of morality for children. I am very glad that this Bill has not allowed that heresy which I feared to come in, namely, the right of entry of denominational teachers into the council schools: I believe that that would have been entirely fatal to efficiency. It would have introduced the old pen system which divided the children up into different sections and would have interfered with educational efficiency. I am thankful that some very fair facilities are to be given for special instruction in the existing denominational schools. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said that this Bill would stereotype the religious instruction given; but I think he has misunderstood the Bill, because there is nothing in it that would prevent people who desire any particular kind of denominational instruction from going to the expense of enlarging their schools, or building others, and renting them for the purpose of teaching their own particular creed or gospel. The fact that they are not building so many denominational schools since the Act of 1902 is the clearest indication that they do not desire them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said that as far as these facilities were concerned they were in future to be arbitrarily decided by a majority. One reason why I am so much attracted to this Bill is because it places the power in the hands of the people themselves. It is not as though the Free Church Council were going to devise the syllabus and apply it all over the country. What is going to happen? The Education Committees themselves are composed of sane and reasonable people, and they are to sit at a table around which will gather the clergymen, Nonconformist ministers, and laymen, and they will draw up their own syllabus, which will be adapted to suit local requirements. If a special type of instruction is required that particular district will get the type which it desires, subject only to the conscience clause. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] If you put into the hands of the people themselves the power to decide the extent of their religious instruction that is a sound democratic principle. [CRIES of "No, no."] Well, that is what I understand by the Bill. Anyone who has had anything to do with the working of a school must come to the conclusion that this religious controversy is purely artificial, and is created by outside people. I happen to be chairman of a committee which has 45,000 children under its care, and three-fourths of our schools are Council schools, and I never hear of any religious difficulty. I find the same state of things in other parts of the country, and the parents are satisfied with the simple instruction which is given. There is no boycotting or invidious distinction, and the committee do not know who are Churchmen or who are Nonconformists, and neither do the teachers. If the ministers and the clergymen and the ecclesiastical laymen—who are generally more fanatical than the parsons themselves—would only let this matter alone, we should soon have a peaceful solution of the religious difficulty. I think simple Bible instruction is a wise compromise. We do not want the extreme or extravagant views of the hon. Member for North West Ham on the one side, or the views of hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Opposition side on the other. What we want is a modest compromise, and I think in this measure we shall find something which is in accordance with the wishes of the electors. If hon. Gentlemen will not attempt to play the part of professional agitators, and will refrain from setting up religious difficulties and leave those engaged in the work to deal with the parents of the children themselves, the smouldering fires of the religious difficulty will soon burn themselves out, and we shall have peace and progress in educational matters.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I believe that I was about the only hon. Member on my side of the House who took exception to certain parts of the Bill of 1902 which dealt with religious education. I did so on that occasion because I thought the Bill bore hardly upon the Dissenters and was unjust to them. This Bill, however, I am compelled to oppose on the ground that it bears far harder upon Churchmen than the other Bill bore upon Dissenters. I think before we adopt the First Reading of such a Bill as this we ought to realise the relation of the clauses and their possibilities, and see how they will work. We ought also to consider how they can be amended. I think it would be almost an outrage on the country and upon every Churchman and many religious denominations if this Bill passed unamended. May I state first of all that in my opinion the country remains religious? I believe that even bad men desire that their children should be religiously brought up. At least I found it so when I frequented the slums. I have sometimes been sent for by dying men who wished to consult me about their children, and who were desirous that their children might be brought up under religious influences which they themselves had either abandoned or had never experienced. How does the Government deal with this earnest instinct of the people? Remember who the people are. Half of them are spending a life under the down-right benumbing influence of the factory, they never look nature in the face, and I would say that religion is the only one good thing which is left to them. You say to these people, "You shall not have that religious teaching to which you have been accustomed; you shall not have that which you wish to have. Your feelings of reverence and devotion have been flowing along certain channels and possibly they can flow in no other way, but they shall flow along those channels no more; or if they do, they shall do so under most coercive and intolerable restrictions." You are going to supersede Anglicanism and Catholicism by local committees. Would you, sitting on the Government Bench, do that with your own children? Already there is no chance of any devotional exercises in the homes of many of these children. It is one of the disastrous and appalling circumstances of overcrowding which I have seldom heard pointed out that a man or a woman cannot conveniently say their prayers at home. Therefore the religion of the school, which is all that is left to them, is vital. You are going to supersede that to which they are accustomed. I do not at all object to the taking over of any denominational schools if the religious teaching which exists there is continued. I should prefer to see them taken over by the local authority, and, subject to a rent, I should not object to them being used by other denominations. In the country areas served by those schools I should be perfectly willing to see free entry accorded to all denominations. In these respects the Bill requires amending. I should like to see absolute religious equality established in this Bill. You cannot establish religious equality by depriving Anglicans and Roman Catholics of their rights. You can establish it only by conferring rights on other denominations, and I for one am very willing to do it. I take it that the Government method of dealing with certain denominational schools is that they would allow them some extra facilities. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that if four-fifths of the children in a certain denominational school belong to that denomination, the teaching in the school will continue to be in the future as it has been in the past. I wish to do the fullest justice to Roman Catholics, so much so that if justice is denied to us I would vote for justice being done to them. The question is not one of the principles in certain schools, but of the principles in the whole community. If the Anglicans have overbuilt their school accommodation and have only three-quarters of the number of scholars belonging to their denomination, are they therefore to be deprived of all their schools? The country would not submit to that. There are 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 Roman Catholics whose schools are to be preserved because four-fifths of their children are Roman Catholics; but if there are 15,000,000 Anglicans, are their schools all to be confiscated because they have only three-quarters of the children in their schools belonging to their denomination? I cannot see how the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education can call himself a Liberal, when he violates Liberal traditions in that way. He is not a Liberal. You do not want equality. You are aiming at dominance. You are establishing inequality. In talking lately with a number of Dissenters I gave them a formula, and asked if they would accept it. It is "equal justice to all." Justice to the Anglican, or the Baptist, or the Roman Catholic, to be defined by precisely similar justice conceded to everyone else. There was not one of the moderate Dissenters to whom I have talked who did not freely assent to that. I earnestly plead for this formula of equal rights for all—for the Roman Catholic, the Churchman, and the Dissenter.

SIR ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorganshire, E.): I rise on behalf of all those with whom I am associated, the Members for Wales, to thank the President of the Board of Education for having taken power to set up a Council of Education in Wales. I could not help thinking during the great speech of the right hon. Gentleman of the difficulty he had to contend with to educate the people of England. The right hon. Gentleman had a very different opinion in regard to the people of Wales. He considered that in educational matters Wales was worthy of Home Rule. In that way he has escaped a lot of difficulty. There is every reason to believe that the people of Wales will be united on that question. It is a very good augury that three weeks ago there was an important conference in Wales—a conference attended by three of the four bishops of the Established Church, the two Roman Catholic bishops, and the heads of all the Nonconformist denominations, and when the question was put to them whether they would accept the principle of the council in Wales to which should be relegated the management of education in the principality they came to a unanimous decision. As to the present measure I am one of those who take the view that we shall never have a satisfactory form of education so long as we associate it with religion. But in that I only indicate my own individual view, because a great number of my colleagues take a different view. All I have to say with regard to the measure is that the right hon. gentleman will do all that it is possible to do to unite the opposing interests in the great scheme foreshadowed to the House. I wish it success, and I believe the right hon. Gentleman is making himself a name by the great measure which he has sketched. Anyhow, it will, I trust, allay the great bitterness which has existed in the past, and in no part of the country is that more likely to be accomplished than in Wales.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): It is impossible to discuss this Bill without going back and asking what has caused it. How is it that within so few years of the passing of an Act intended to be comprehensive we are obliged to deal with the matter again? The Act of 1902 is admitted to have had the result of giving to every child in every school in the land an equal chance which it had not before. But the Act was also conceived in the strong belief that the country desired that definite religious education should be preserved and maintained.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. There was a serious principle involved in the Bill which very much affected the neighbouring counties. Under the Bill the Middlesex County Council took powers to interfere within the area of the Hertfordshire County Council. That was a principle perfectly new, and thoroughly objectionable, and on that ground alone he was justified in moving that the Bill be thrown out. The Middlesex County Council proposed to go for 1,500 yards into the county of Hertford, to take samples of water from their streams, and in other ways to interfere with the work of the Hertfordshire County Council. The streams to which reference was made in the Bill were at present under the control of the Thames Conservancy Board, and the Lea Conservancy Board, and their purity had always been safeguarded under the Rivers Pollution Act of 1886. It was true that provision was made in the Bill that the powers sought for by the Middlesex County Council should not be carried out without the written consent of the clerk of the Hertfordshire County Council, but it was highly objectionable that it should rest merely on the goodwill or otherwise of the clerk of the Hertfordshire County Council to confer these powers on another county council.

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster) in seconding the Amendment, said that he had no sort of objection to the general powers which the Bill sought to obtain, but the Bill contained innovations in certain of its clauses which he did not think were generally understood by the House. Within the last two or three weeks the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade had laid it down that it was very undesirable to take objection to such Bills on Second Reading. But in this case the Bill contained a provision which was contrary to the general law. His right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board was aware that the Rivers Pollution Act distinctly intended to give to the county councils of England the right to control inside their own area all matters to which that Act applied. By Section 18 of the Rivers Pollution Act an exception was made in regard to the area controlled by the Thames and the Lea Conservancy Boards. His county thought that it was rather hard on them that the powers given to all other counties were withheld from the Hertfordshire County Council, simply because London drew its water supply from their district. The people of Hertfordshire objected to a neighbouring county council coming within their area to control in effect their local administration, especially when the Conservancies already were the Pollution Authorities. If that principle was once admitted it would be the commencement of a system which would have far-reaching effects. Middlesex had never complained to the Thames and the Lea Conservancy Boards that there was anything wrong going on in Hertfordshire, and the people in that county believed that they were perfectly able to manage their own affairs. He would be prepared to withdraw his opposition to the Bill if the Middlesex County Council would relinquish the provisions by which they sought to go inside another governing area.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Carlile.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) thought he could make out a very substantial case for allowing the Bill to follow the usual routine and go before a Committee upstairs in order that the clauses might be fully considered. There were forty clauses in the Bill, many of them dealing with matters with which it was very desirable to deal, and which had the support of all the local authorities in the county. The only clauses to which objection was taken were those relating to the pollution of streams and in which power was asked to go 1,500 yards beyond the county boundary to take samples of water to insure that for that distance the streams should be free from pollution. It had been said that this was exceptional legislation, but he would point out that exceptional powers were given to the Mersey and the West Riding River Pollution Boards for dealing with river pollution. Besides, the County Council of Middlesex were given special powers by an Act in 1898 to deal with the pollution of the rivers and streams in the county, and as a result they had established a Rivers Committee and a special staff and department at considerable cost and labour. They had been able to do excellent work during the time they had had the power, and was it fair that this should be frustrated by pollutions in adjoining counties which Middlesex was unable at present to prevent? The House must remember the very large and populous urban districts in Middlesex, the health of which was dependent upon the purity of the water courses. While Middlesex had thus been alive to these dangers and active in taking measures to deal with them, Hertfordshire had done nothing. The town of Hertford had polluted the river Lea for a generation until now the water became inky black when stirred up. The fact was that the county of Hertford was half a century behind the times in regard to sewage pollution, and its methods were so primeval that a local authority in the neighbourhood of the nuisance allowed crude sewage to strain through osier hurdles. All that was wanted by the Middlesex County Council was to have access for 1,500 yards in Hertfordshire in order to take samples of water to see whether the streams were polluted or not, and to be able to stop pollutions which might be found within that distance. He ventured to think that in the interest of the great working class population in the county of Middlesex a sluggard and slothful county in matters of river pollution and sewage disposal, such as the local authorities of Hertfordshire had proved it to be, should not be permitted to object to the county of Middlesex ensuring that the river entering the latter county was as pure as it should be. It was only last month that the Court of King's Bench had remitted a special case, stated for the opinion of the Court, to the justices directing them to convict the local authority of Bishop's Stortford, on the information and complaint of the Lea Conservancy, for polluting the Stort (a tributary of the Lea) for allowing an impure and insufficiently treated effluent to pass into the river.

This was an instance of the manner in which Hertfordshire authorities viewed these matters, for the local justices had refused to convict though the offence was proved, and the district council's only answer was that they had negotiated with a view to make their system more effective. Well might the Lord Chief Justice remark, in giving judgment, that while the justices might have regard to the degree of pollution, the case could not be considered trivial when the sewage of a town of 7,000 inhabitants was concerned, the impure effluent from which was being allowed to pass into the river. He hoped that the House would send the Bill to the Committee upstairs, which would see to it that the county of Hertford would be protected from any injustice.

*Mr. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire,, Hertford) took exception to the violent language which the hon. Member for Ealing had used in reference to Hertford and Bishop Stortford. The hon. Gentleman had shown that he knew very little indeed of the town or county of Hertford. The reason why those who represented the constituencies in Hertfordshire were opposing the Second Reading of the Bill was because it infringed a very important principle of local government. The Bill gave power to the county council of Middlesex to invade the area of the county council of Hertford and to look after business with which it was not directly concerned. The hon. Member for Ealing had referred to the case of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board in Liverpool, but that was absolutely a different case. The hon. Member's attitude was the more surprising as he had a special reason for knowing all about this case, being a member of the Lea Conservancy Board, whose duty it was to prevent the pollution of the various rivers in Hertfordshire. The proposal of this Bill, as he had said, was an absolutely different one. Why did this Bill apply only to 1,500 yards; why not to 3,000 yards or any other distance?

*Mr. NIELD said he had been careful to point out that the 1,500 yards was for the purpose of securing that the stream should be pure before it entered into the county of Middlesex.

*Mr. ABEL SMITH said that the hon. Member imputed that Hertfordshire was not able to take care of the purity of the stream.

*Mr. NIELD said he had only to produce documents in his possession to show how lamentably behind the times Hertfordshire was.

*Mr. ABEL SMITH denied that Hertfordshire was behind the times. He quite admitted that as a general rule a Bill of this character should go upstairs, but this measure contained a novel principle upon which the House should express an opinion, unless the promoters withdrew the clause containing it. He wished on behalf of the county of Hertford to protest against the procedure which was being adopted.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) said that in its main features the Bill was useful, desirable, and necessary, and he appealed to the House in the light of the more necessary business which was commanding their attention to give it a Second Reading and allow it to go to a Committee upstairs so that the microscopic differences between Hertfordshire and Middlesex could upon the evidence adduced be thrashed out. With great respect he thought that the Bill had occupied two much time that evening, and he was sure that justice could only be done to both Middlesex and Hertfordshire by allowing the Bill to go upstairs, and he hoped that that would be done without the House being put to the trouble of a division.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) did not wish to intervene in this desperate dispute between Hertfordshire and Middlesex, but he pointed out the extreme difficulty that Members like himself who came from Ireland had in deciding upon a question of this kind. Questions of this sort ought to be settled elsewhere than in the Imperial Parliament. A discussion of this kind showed the necessity for Home Rule. He did not wish to say anything against Middlesex or to quarrel with Hertfordshire, but he re-echoed the statement of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that this Bill should be read a second time and sent upstairs, and that they should make arrangements to keep it upstairs.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [9th April], "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to education in England and Wales."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Question again proposed.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY, continuing his speech, said: I ventured a short time ago to refer to the Act of 1902 and I claimed that it had great merits, that it gave an equal choice to every child in every school of the land, that it removed many of the difficulties of the Nonconformists and advanced the cause of education generally. The Act, however, I am bound to say, was open to attack upon various points, and what made it specially open to attack was the invoking of a rate, and many of us thought that in that regard we were embarking upon a slippery plane. But the chief objection taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite was that it did not sufficiently attack the parson, as they always had a hope that the influence of the clergy in regard to education would be ousted. So the cry was raised—how little ground for it can now be seen—that Nonconformity was in danger, that religious liberty was at stake, and that Protestantism was being menaced. There was a crusade up and down the country, and there is no doubt that this cause contributed largely to the great success achieved by the Party opposite at the recent elections, and that this Bill has been brought forward at the present time in answer to that imperious demand. We undoubtedly shall have an enormous increase of the burden of rates under it, as the buildings which have hitherto been maintained by their owners have to be taken over by the State, and a contribution is to be made from the Imperial Exchequer. At the same time, I am thankful to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for introducing this Bill, and for facing a very difficult task, which he has done, I believe, with a wish as far as he can to carry out the instructions which he has received. I am thankful that the right hon. Gentleman, whom I believe desired to be as impartial as he could, has not done away with religious teaching altogether. I am glad that the strong desire for it which exists throughout the country has been recognised. I do not depreciate the value of undenominational teaching in what are called the fundamental traditions of Christianity, but I maintain that if this Bill does not do away with religious teaching it lowers its effect and efficiency. Religious teaching will, I think, under the measure be seriously interfered with, taken out of the hands of those most qualified to give it, and pushed into a back place, as I understand it will not be given in school hours at all. Parents are already complaining of the loss of service of their children, and that grievance will be increased. Are they therefore likely to send their children half an hour before the business of the day begins? I regard this as a most serious blot upon the Bill, and I hope some arrangement may be made to meet this difficulty; otherwise I fear that religious teaching will become a thing of the past. Is there any necessity for the drastic treatment proposed by this Bill, and will the country, when they realise that it is to be applied to private school buildings supplied by private beneficence in which are being educated more than half the children of this country, tolerate it? The people are to be deprived of those buildings, for which they have made great sacrifices not only in the past but at a recent date; the money subscribed voluntarily for educational purposes by Churchmen during not a long period having been calculated at little less than £1,000,000. In removing the grievance which was said to be felt by Nonconformists the Government are doing a much greater injustice to a large body of persons who take a very earnest interest in this matter. I think the Church may claim honestly to have made sacrifices for religious teaching, and she feels that a provision that there shall be religious teaching for all who desire it, such teaching to be given at a reasonable time and during school hours, will recommend itself to the feeling of the people generally. I think, however, that this measure will arouse a feeling of great antagonism throughout the country, and I am sure that the Government will realise before they come to the Committee stage that they are doing a great injustice which ought not to go forward.

*Mr. COMPTON RICKETT (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross): It is remarkable how little has been said in defence of denominational teaching. The only really live question which has been raised in the debate so far has been whether we shall restrict moral teaching in public schools to secular lines, or whether the old school board standard of religious education is to be made national. I should like to say, speaking as I do in touch with a large number of Nonconformist organisations, that this Bill is not regarded by us as a victory for Nonconformity, nor do we attempt to separate Nonconformity from the interests of citizenship throughout the country. We are not asking for anything different from that which can be claimed by the whole of the community. We are perfectly prepared to admit that in past times a good deal has been done for education by the Church of England, and by the Roman Catholic Church; but this Bill does not confiscate the property of the Church of England, and no injustice has been done by this Bill, which reserves the whole of her property. The utmost liberty is left reserved to her to raise an income by letting her buildings or by giving her power to sell the fabric. The income so derived will be available for payment of teachers under the facilities granted in this Bill. I do not know whether the Minister for Education has made it perfectly clear to us whether in the case of additions or extensions being required the cost will fall upon the local authority. The greatest point of controversy in this debate has been the question of the character of the religious education which it is proposed to continue. My right hon. friend believes that the greater part of the country desires the form of religious teaching as at present adopted in provided schools. It is not the Nonconformists who wish to drive the Bible out of the schools; for we believe that, under the present system, we do furnish a basis of fact — a religious scaffolding is provided which relieves the teachers of religion, whether in Sunday schools or other places, of a great deal of preliminary work. I doubt whether the spiritual vision accompanies such teaching; but whatever may be the spiritual effect or non-spiritual effect, it is some advantage to lay the foundation of Biblical instruction in the child, and to scatter the dry seeds, so that when the spiritual atmosphere arrives those seeds may break into newness of life. Are the children of the poor to be deprived of that idealism of the past which has so largely moulded the secular history of England, and of access to the highest literature and the purest poetry? If that be the general wish of the people in this country no Nonconformist who is true to his principles will deny the right of the secularist, the agnostic, and the atheist to protest against the expenditure of public funds upon Biblical instruction, as the Nonconformist to the sacramental teaching of the historic Churches. But should we be reduced to the secular form, I wish it to be understood that it will not be by the wish, desire, or action of the great organisation of Free Churchmen The Free Churches to-day speak with one voice when they say they are prepared to retain the Bible instruction in the schools and the common form of worship which is familiar to those who knew the school-board system. Many Members opposite have seen the article in the *Spectator* in which the writer in serious words warned the Church of England against letting it be supposed that they are not willing that the Bible should be handled freely in the schools of this country because it is a sacred book and should only be read by those who can properly interpret it. That is contrary to the practice of the English Church and the spirit of the Reformation. It would be a most dangerous thing to impress, for it would precipitate a change in the relation of the people of this country to the Established Church. The Minister of Education has, I believe, interpreted rightly the feeling of many Anglicans and Catholics, that they would prefer to have some religion taught in the schools than no religion at all, and if that is rendered impossible the fault will not rest with the Nonconformists. There are some things in this Bill that will require attention on the Second Reading and Committee stage. There are the special facilities which are to be given to certain schools where four-fifths of the scholars belong to a particular creed or Church, and where the parents are desirous that the teaching of the Church should be continued. The natural effect of this arrangement will be to perpetuate the dual system in a modified form, though, it is true, under representative control. It is a little inconsistent with the statement that there is to be no test for the teacher if the religious lesson may be given by a teacher in a school which belongs to the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, or the Jews. I suppose, however, the common-sense of the education authority, without making a test, would naturally persuade them to appoint one or more teachers belonging to the church of which the school is practically representative. But naturally, the tendency would be to canvass very much for those schools and to concentrate children in them. They would not be national schools in the ordinary sense, but schools in which one denomination or another would concentrate their children so as to obtain the special facilities and arrangements offered. Then it does not seem quite reasonable that these facilities should be given to only one denomination. It is too often forgotten or omitted to be stated that there are in thousands of parishes in England only one school, and that an Anglican school, in which the catechism of the Church of England is taught, but in which no opportunity is provided for the religious teaching of any other denomination. These are questions which will arise with regard to hundreds of schools in this country, under general parish trusts, in which the teachings of the English Church are given, but which have had large contributions from Nonconformists in the parish who, although they were not members of the Church, have given to the Church school, because it was the only school in the district. If the catechism may be taught, why not also Free Church doctrine? Taking the Bill as a whole, we feel that it is in accordance with the decision which was given by the country, a decision which was indicated before there was any controversy upon free trade or protection. The tide had turned and the elections were going against the Government directly the Education Act of 1902 was passed. In ordinary times Nonconformists are divided upon many political subjects and vote differently. In this matter of education they have given their decision solidly. The result of the election proves that they have power behind opinion. They do not desire to jump upon a prostrate foe. They only claim fair equality between church and church—we have gone a little too far now to accept mere toleration. The Nonconformists of this country during the last century have grown in wealth, experience, and in culture. Roughly half of the population of this country are adherents of some religion. Anglicans and Catholics on one side, and Free Churchmen on the other, about divide that half. The other half of the population are indifferent or hostile. But even these last wish their children to have the opportunity, which they themselves had, of some religious teaching, some familiarity with the Bible, leaving them when they came to maturity to accept or reject Christianity. This Bill is in the main just and fair, and it will with some corrections and comment have the support of the Nonconformists of this country.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I do not propose on this occasion to make any attempt to deal at length with the details put forward in the brilliant speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education. The hon. member for the Osgoldcross division has touched on one or two of those details. He has referred to the proposals granting special religious privileges where the parents of four-fifths of the children attending any particular school make a demand for special denominational teaching. I confess, without going into the details, it is difficult to understand what possible defence there can be for extending religious privileges where four-fifths of the parents demand them and refusing them to three-fourths, two-thirds, or a bare majority. I shall wait, however, to see what the actual proposal is before making any further comment. In the same way I do not desire to deal with the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman that he is going to sweep away once and for ever the imposition of the test for teachers. I fail to see how the statement as to the abolition of the so-called teacher's test is reconcilable with the concession to be made in some schools. But whatever that proposal may amount to I do not wish at the moment to deal with the details of the Bill. Let me however assure the hon. Member who has just sat down that the members belonging to the Church of England care comparatively little for the justice or injustice of the proposals to take away our property. What we do care about is the interference with religious teaching. The main principle on which the Bill rests is the establishment of undenominational teaching. That appears to me to be a proposal marked by profound intolerance. I do not understand why this claim for the establishment of undenominationalism in the schools of the country —and it is compulsory—should be thought more tolerant than the compulsory establishment of any other religion. It is certainly the establishment of one particular system of religion. Whether hon. Gentlemen have realised what undenominationalism may prove in the future is another matter. It is, however, unquestionably a system of religion. It may be an ill-defined system. It may be a system never professed by any Church. But it is a religion, a body of doctrine; and hon. Members understand little about undenominationalism or any other religious teaching if they doubt the statement that to force upon parents undenominationalism is as intolerant as to force them to accept for their children the teaching of any other body of religion. The hon. Member for the Osgoldcross Division will allow me to point out that the speech he has just delivered unconsciously breathed the true spirit of intolerance. "We offer," said the hon. Member, "undenominationalism, and if you refuse that you shall have secularism." In effect he said that it shall be one particular form of religious teaching, or nothing, and in that is the true spirit of intolerance. It is no answer to say that upon that foundation any doctrine can be added, for undoubtedly parents who desire that their children should be taught the religion they profess are unfairly treated as compared with those who accept undenominational teaching. There were remarkable speeches delivered earlier in the debate by the hon. Members for North West Ham and Leicester, and with a large part of those speeches I may say I am in agreement. I heard with great pleasure and thankfulness their sturdy denunciation of the flabby religion of the day, their regret that absence of definite religion was so widespread, and their argument that undenominationalism was a poor weapon with which to combat the spirit of irreligion commanded my full assent. They said that to compel all children to be undenominationalists was intolerance and bigotry. and therefore they said, "We would have them all secularists." That is not what they desire, but it is in effect what they said; and that, again, is a form of intolerance declaring that children should not have that form of religious teaching which their parents consider essential. That is the real vice of all schemes of religious teaching except the one that would give the religious teaching which parents desire. That is the system denominationalists desire to establish. [Laughter.] Hon. Members laugh, but that is because they have not taken the trouble to understand the position of churchmen who do not desire—and let them clear their minds of this for once and for ever—this religious doctrine with the idea of proselytising the children, but because they desire education in the religion in which they firmly believe. We believe that the only way in which you can secure a religious education which will be satisfactory is that in which the children of all parents alike shall be taught the religion that their parents desire. I contend that we went a long way towards that scheme in the Act of 1902, and if this Bill was a measure to carry that scheme further and make it what we intended it to be, I should be a hearty supporter of it. I regret this Bill not only because it is intolerant, but also and mainly because I am sorry to be forced to the belief that undenominationalism is not only an unjust system but will be ultimately found to be an unworkable and unattractive system. It is, after all, only a half-way house, and half-way houses are extremely difficult to occupy for any length of time. It is the defect of all such schemes, and whatever you may think you can teach children unconsciously, no grown-up man, no person who has arrived at years of discretion, is satisfied with an undenominational position. What you want more than anything else is a teacher who genuinely and absolutely believes the religion or the scripture or whatever it is that he is going to teach. You must have men burning with faith if you are to obtain the best results with the children, and you cannot conceive any man burning with the faith of undenominationalism. The whole point of undenominationalism is that it is more or less colourless; but the human mind will never be able to do without passion, which is the real requisite if you are to teach the children religion. I think too—though in this perhaps hon. Members will not agree with me—that the theory of undenominationalism is utterly foreign to the nature of the child. Hon. Members talk as if dogma or definite teaching are repulsive to the childish imagination. In my opinion no greater mistake could be made. Children live upon dogma. They have no other means of arriving at a truth. Children believe things because they are told they are true by persons in whom they have trust and confidence. In other words, the difficulties which grown-up persons feel in religious truth and doctrine are not difficulties which the child feels. The child may have other difficulties, but never difficulties with regard to doctrine. That is not the way a child's mind moves. For my part, I do not believe that the attempt to teach undenominationalism will ever succeed in the long run. I know that the right hon. Gentleman said, and said with great force, if I may be permitted to say so, that the experience since 1870 has been very favourable to the teaching of undenominationalism. That is, I quite agree, the strongest argument the right hon. Gentleman has; but he has to consider two things. In the first place, the denominational system has been perpetually growing side by side with the undenominational system. It has been perpetually brought into competition with it and tested by it. You are now going to sweep away denominational teaching. ["No."] Well, practically you are going to sweep it away, except in the four-fifths clause, which may or may not protect it. When you have done that you will have your undenominationalism utterly untested and unstrengthened by the rival system growing up by its side, by which the teachers, parents, and authorities have been able to compare the results. There has never been undenominationalism taught in this country as it will probably be taught in the future. Undenominationalism means religious teaching which avoids all dogmas distinctive of any denominational religion. If that test be applied strictly under the hostile pressure of a Unitarian or secularist, for instance, how much religious teaching will survive? There is no security whatever that under the Cowper-Temple clause anything that can really be called Christianity will be taught at all. Do not think I am merely conjuring up a bogey with which to try and frighten supporters of this Bill. I implore hon. Members to look at the history of undenominational teaching in the United States, and they will find that over and over again it has become, either by law or practice, secularism unclothed and undisguised. It is because I believe that undenominationalism must ultimately lead us to secularism that I feel so strongly about the proposals made by the Government. We have heard the earnest and sincere speeches made by the hon. Members for North West Ham and Leicester; they have merely emphasised the arguments I have been endeavouring to put before the House, showing that undenominationalism is inconsistent with what they believe to be religious instruction, and it appears to me that their argument is from the point of view of undenominationalism absolutely unanswerable. To my mind, the issue before the House is whether or not religion is an essential and integral part of the education of the young. I think there can be only one answer to that question. I cannot conceive such a monstrosity as that of the children of this country being brought up without any religion at all. A child without religion is a child without the most beautifying influences of life. The right hon. Gentleman said, "Let us preserve any idealism that we can." It is worth a better name than "idealism." While listening to the right hon. Gentleman's speech, with his brilliant witticisms, not all of them in the best of taste, but all of them brilliant, and many of them just, I could not help feeling that, although the right hon. Gentleman realised the vast importance of the Bill he was introducing, his speech was not conceived in the tone most likely to commend it to those on the Opposition side of the House. I cannot help feeling that there must be many hon. Members, and, in fact, I know there are many hon. Members, on the Ministerial side of the House who have as earnest and sincere a belief in religion as has any hon. Member in the House, or any person in the country, and to them, even at this eleventh hour, I venture to make an appeal. You do not desire to deprive the children of this country of religion. Put from your minds the idea that our interest in this matter is merely the interest of a proselytising Church, and conceive of us for a moment as fellow-labourers in the cause of religion. We are prepared, at least I am prepared, to offer you any terms you like, provided you preserve religious teaching to the children of the country. I have no desire to put Nonconformists in a position inferior to that of Churchmen. I would go further. At this moment, when the cause of religion is so hardly pressed, I would be glad to give you more than you are entitled to, more than you can justly claim, if only you will leave Christianity as part of the education of the country. When this matter comes to be considered in the impartial pages of history I believe there will be something which historians will find it very difficult to explain, namely, that a great body of religious thought, comprising, as I know it does comprise, some of the most religiously minded men of this country, was yet largely instrumental in dealing what I cannot but believe will be a death blow to the religious education of the children of this country. I know you do not mean it, but I ask you to consider once again whether the course that you have undertaken will not necessarily lead to the secularisation of education. [MINISTERIAL Cries of "No."] How are you going to resist the arguments that the secularists will put before you? Will not the position you have taken up inevitably lead to the secularising of the schools? I venture to make this appeal, but I fear it will prove fruitless. All I can say for myself and for those who agree with me on this side of the House is that we at any rate will be guiltless in the matter. We will do everything we can to prevent the consummation of this crime against the religion of the country, and, if we are powerless to prevent its execution, we will take the first opportunity we can to reverse it and to wipe its memory from the annals of the country.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): As one who has worked in connection with different grades of education in London I should like to thank the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education for the broad and liberal principles which he expounded to the House, for the lofty ideals which inspired his speech, and for the graceful diction with which he clothed his thoughts. I hope that the Bill which has been introduced this afternoon may prove to be in some degree a measure of relief to those of our fellow citizens whose consciences have been offended by the Acts of 1902 and 1903. As was once said by Mr. John Bright—

> "When the law comes in conflict with the consciences of law-abiding citizens, it is the law that must be altered, and not the consciences of the citizens that must be forced."

I trust we are about to approach some amendment of the law which is to bring about that result. I cordially thank the right hon. Gentleman for foreshadowing in the Bill some promise that in future all the schools publicly maintained will be publicly controlled, and when I hear of intolerance from the noble Lord opposite, I say, as one who has sat on a public education authority, that we have felt deeply the intolerance of legislation which has compelled the ratepayers to support schools which they do not control and pay the salaries of teachers whom they do not appoint. When it comes to a question of providing one type of school for the whole of the country, I confess I was not quite clear as to some of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman and how far that ideal will be attained by the Bill as the right hon. Gentleman has expounded it. I understood that an option will still attach to local education authorities as to whether they will or will not give religious instruction in the schools at all. Then, again, as to the proposals with regard to schools where four-fifths of the parents desire some form of denominational instruction, it seems to me that that opens a way to a departure from one uniform type of school publicly maintained all over the country. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman does not propose any change in the education authority. I was not one of those who urged or asked that the school boards should be done away with, but now that the education of the country has been made a municipal duty I hope that will not be changed again after only two or three years experience. The late Mr. Matthew Arnold said that public education must rest upon the municipal organisation of the country, and I am glad to think it does rest there now. Then again, John Stuart Mill used to maintain that in each local area there should be but one elective body for all local business, and not different bodies for different parts of it. And in 1870 the principle intended by Mr. Forster was that the municipal bodies should be the educational bodies, and it was subsequently that the *ad hoc* body was introduced. I fully agree, however, that some mode of devolution ought to be placed in the hands of education authorities dealing with large areas. I believe that nothing but good would result from some such form of devolution; but I am bound to say that the experience which has been related to the House of the work of the London County Council as an education authority is not in accord with my experience. I have been chairman of its Education Committee for the last two years, and I am bound to say it is not true to assert that the education of London has largely got into the hands of officials. The London County Council has brought in this, as in other matters, the same large democratic principles to apply, and I believe will achieve the same excellent results in regard to education as in administering to other great social wants. I was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to introduce some clauses dealing with endowments and charities. It was hoped in London that many thousands of pounds would accrue to the local education authority in London by the clauses relating to this subject in the Acts of 1902, and 1903, but up to the present time something less, I think, than £10 has been received from that source. When I come to the religious aspect of the case I feel some difficulties. I have yet to learn a definition of what undenominational religion is. I cannot help remembering that Mr. Gladstone in 1870 said he did not object to a strict limitation of all teaching paid for, in schools aided or provided out of public money, whether rate or tax, to purely secular instruction. When he said that, Mr. Gladstone was certainly not speaking as one who desired secular education alone for the children of this country. Mr. Gladstone said of the solution of 1870, "It was in no sense my choice," and that when you are asked to include religion and exclude dogma you are asking to solve "a problem which has not yet been solved by any State or Parliament." I do not know whether by those who speak on behalf of undenominational teaching the Apostles' Creed would be included, but if so, it would exclude the saintly Channing and the pure and pious Martineau, and are not the views of such persons to be considered in the solution of this problem? I attended University College school in Gower Street, which was contemned by its critics as a place where Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics were herded together and received no religious instruction. I may be a melancholy example of the result; but, though no religious instruction was given in that school, I received there a lesson in liberality of sentiment and respect for the opinion of others which I would not barter for all the precise teaching of the thirty-nine articles. It seems that we are to be particularly cautious in regard to conscience in questions of teaching, but not in questions of paying; we may collect rates, apparently, for teaching undenominational religion from Catholics, Anglicans, and others who object to such teaching. That is a problem which I hope will further engage the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, so that, while relieving the consciences of those first offended, the Bill shall not go too far in the opposite direction, but shall emerge from the Committee stage a true educational reform not conceived in any narrow or bigoted spirit.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): In common with other Members of this House I have not had the opportunity of reading the Bill which has been introduced this afternoon, but I may congratulate the President of the Board of Education upon the extremely lucid manner in which he explained the chief provisions of the Bill, so that every one who listened to his speech had the opportunity of understanding the essential and fundamental principles upon which it rests. In one of those short and crisp essays in the writing of which the right hon. Gentleman employs his few leisure hours, and which afford the greatest pleasure to all lovers of English, he has said—

> "Nobody, I suppose, would call the English a religious people."

That essay was written before the right hon. Gentleman occupied his present official position, but I venture to think that the memorials which have been sent to him and the deputations he has received on this subject must have altered his opinion. Be that as it may, it is quite certain that the value of this Bill must be considered in reference to the conscientious convictions on religious matters of large sections of the British public. I take it that this Bill is the response of the Government to the pledges given by Members opposite at the recent election. They gave a large number of promises; and it is unfortunate that many of those promises are supposed to carry with them a mandate from the country. It is extremely difficult, however, when promises and pledges have been so profusely scattered to be able to say which of them represents the views of the people generally on any particular question. I think I may say, however, that the people of this country gave the Government no mandate whatever to take over and transfer to the local authorities the non-provided schools or to prevent the trustees of those schools from giving religious instruction therein in conformity with the wishes of the parents of the children. If a *plebiscite* had been taken on this particular question there would have been, I think, an overwhelming majority in favour of the retention of our denominational schools in the hands of the present holders. [Cries of "Oh!"] Well, I admit there would have been a minority of persons desiring to see undenominational instruction given in our schools, and a further minority in favour of secular teaching only, but I feel quite certain that the people of this country, whether they be Catholics, Protestants, or Jews, are distinctly attached to their denominational schools and desire to maintain them in their own hands. I take it that the fundamental principle of this Bill, in so far as it amends the Act of 1902, is the abolition of the dual system of our schools. This is a very important question. I need scarcely say that I personally do not approach it in any partisan spirit. I regard the subject of education as too vital to the well-being of the country to desire that it should be used as an instrument of political warfare. As the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of Oxford has said, if this Bill be passed we shall be entering upon a new era of religious controversy, more severe than any we have had before. Under the present system, which has existed from the year 1870, there is freedom of teaching in our different classes of schools, variety of method, and full opportunity is afforded to the members of different denominations to provide the particular religious instruction which they require in their own schools. The new Bill abolishes so far as separate management is concerned this dual system, and I take it from the speeches which have been made on the other side of the House that the abolition of this dual system is its chief merit and the main reason which commends it to their acceptance. It has been said that this change will give a more national character to our whole school system. I admit that the unification which has been suggested will simplify our educational system, but it will not on that account become more national. If it were so I fear that we should never be likely to have a national system of secondary education, because there is nothing which educationists regard as more important than the maintenance of the freedom and elasticity which characterises our secondary schools. I take it that a system is national if it is under State control, and under the Act of 1902 both these systems were under State control. In order that an educational system may be national it is not necessary that it should be under municipal control, but it is essential that it should be under the general direction of the State. What seems to me to be the most serious defect in the Bill, as outlined by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education is the removal altogether from the management of the existing non-provided schools of persons representing the trustees, than whom none more capable and better prepared to take a living interest in the work of the schools. As I understand the Bill both classes of schools will be managed by the local authority, and the representation of the trustees on the management of non-provided schools will cease. It seems to me to be a very grave responsibility that in order to secure unity in the management of the schools the vast amount of available voluntary energy in the cause of education which is found in the religious activity of the men and women of this country should be wholly and entirely sacrificed. I wonder if any hon. Members of this House have ever visited the schools under the direction of the Christian Brothers in Dublin, Cork, and other parts of Ireland, or the schools under the *Frères Chrétiens* in Paris and other parts of France. In these schools the teachers are not paid high salaries, and they have not passed highly qualifying examinations, and yet owing to the enthusiasm with which they discharge their duties the results of the teaching compare most favourably with those of any State-aided or municipally-controlled schools. It was Froude who said that the "Ten Commandments and a handicraft is a good and wholesome equipment to commence life with." I am afraid there is nothing in the Bill that will help to improve practical teaching in the elementary schools nor to encourage the teaching of the Ten Commandments. It must be remembered that the Ten Commandments do not represent wholly and entirely laws of conduct; they contain in themselves a very distinct system of theology and a different kind of theology according to the views of the teacher who interprets them. As a matter of fact the Ten Commandments are not given in the same words in all schools under different denominations. My own experience of education has led me to believe that educationally considered, the advantages so far as the training of children is concerned, are in favour of that given in our voluntary schools. By education, however, I mean something more than book-learning or instruction as specified in any Government code; I include all the influences brought to bear from different sources upon the children during the period of their school life. And in view of this wider meaning of the word I have no hesitation in saying that I would gladly exchange a certain amount of history, geography, and arithmetic for the kindly and genial interest which the managers of the voluntary schools have always shown in the progress of the pupils and the welfare of the teachers, and the additional light and culture which their presence brings into the schoolroom. All these beneficent influences exercised by managers are to be sacrificed in order to obtain uniformity of control. What is to be gained by it? Is there anything in the Bill to show that under the new management the education to be given either in our provided or our non-provided schools will be better than it is at present? I can see no reason for supposing that the education will in any way be improved. One of the advantages claimed is the abolition of religious tests. For my own part I think that this question of religious tests has been used by the electors of this country very much in the same way as the cry of the big loaf and the little loaf and the question of Chinese labour. Can it be said for one moment that the arrangement under which teachers are appointed in non-provided schools involves a religious test in the same sense as that implied in speaking of the religious tests which formerly existed in connection with admission to the older Universities, and to other institutions. What I understand to have taken place in voluntary schools is this. The managers recognising that the great majority of the children in the schools belong to a particular religious denomination, have thought that it was in the interests of the children that the head teacher appointed should be in general sympathy with the children whom he or she has had to teach. Surely it is the duty of the managers, in considering the applications for the appointment of teachers, to take note of all the qualifications which the candidates may possess, and amongst those qualifications the fact that the teachers are of the same religious denomination as the children whom they are going to instruct is a very important factor. I take it that in those schools in which special facilities are to be offered the religion of the parents will be taught to the children. If so, surely it is better that that religion should be taught thoroughly, and it is generally recognised that religion cannot be taught except by those who possess it. For these reasons it is desirable, if possible, that the religion of the teachers should be that of the children whom they have to instruct. This I take it is all that is involved in the question of religious tests. I am not in a position to deal with the financial considerations which have been brought forward in connection with the proposals of this Bill: we shall be better able to deal with them later on. I believe from what I gathered from the President's speech that the Bill contains many proposals of a non-contentious character, some of which hon. Members on this side of the House will be able to agree with. What I feel, however, is that from an educational point of view nothing is gained by the proposals which are contained in the Bill, and I think, having regard to the difficulties connected with the religious question it would have been far better to have given a further trial to the Act of 1902. Many of the difficulties were gradually adjusting themselves, and I fear that, if the grievances of one Party are likely to be removed by the operation of this Bill, it will create grievances in other sections of the community which will more than counterbalance the advantages it is supposed to confer.

*MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): There is no small responsibility attaching to any hon. Member of this House who attempts to discuss a Bill so full of problems as the one now before us without having had the opportunity of seeing the provisions in print, and therefore in rising to give this measure my support I desire to say that I am dealing rather with the general aims than with matters of detail. I feel that there is one tribute which ought to be paid to my right hon. friend which I do not think has been mentioned during the course of the debate. It is a tribute to the great patience and care with which he has received opinions from all sorts and conditions of men and women during the past three months. I think, Sir, that in receiving these deputations and hearing the various opinions which have been placed before him he has perhaps done himself great service, and I am sure he has done the cause of education great service, and I feel that the patience he has exhibited is worthy of commendation. I am sure that now Job and his friends will take second place in the history of the world in comparison with the right hon. Gentleman's conduct in connection with this matter. The admirable exposition with which the right hon. Gentleman opened his remarks enables us to understand what the main provisions of the Bill are, and I feel that my right hon, friend has in no unmistakeable way understood the verdict of the country, and has endeavoured so far as he could to comply with that verdict. Personally, I am not afraid of secular education if it is, as has already been said, to be the outcome of this discussion, but I may say that from a very long experience of school work, both secular and religious, and from some large knowledge of the opinions of the parents of this country, I cannot at all agree with the statement that parents desire that the Bible should be shut out from the schools. What the country has asked for is not an Amendment, but an entire reversal of policy in some particulars. It is said that the pendulum has swung too far, but if we look at the position which the right hon. Gentleman has had to deal with, and how he proposes to deal with it, we shall find that he has not allowed the pendulum to swing too far. There are some particulars in which some of us would desire it should swing a little further. There is no doubt that the country demanded a uniform system in regard to all public elementary schools. We cannot have a truly national system unless it is uniform, and this uniform system must be of such a nature as to destroy the dual system which has been in existence for a great many years. The Bill professes to give complete public control as against the present partial and unfair system of management of our schools. The Bill frees teachers from religious tests, and we cannot imagine that a great public service like education should be in the hands of a public authority, and at the same time demand religious tests for civil servants. I confess that I have listened with some surprise to the description of these tests given by the hon. Member for London University, for that certainly is not the kind of religious tests which are practised, or the conception which the public have of them. The hon. Member is also opposed to allowing, by permission of the local authority, Bible teaching as against the sectarian system in one half of the schools of the nation. I think this Bill meets the demands of the nation in a very fair and admirable way. What will those who support the existing system do? They come to this House and ignore the opinions of the nation so abundantly expressed at the recent election. Many hon. Members have received petitions professedly coming from the parents, but a great majority of them were signed by women, demanding that the present system of education should be absolutely maintained. This, I am quite sure, hon. Members generally must admit is an impossible position for the House to assume in face of the opinion expressed by the country. The way in which this question was dealt with in 1902 put us back to the position prior to 1870 so far as civil and religious liberty was concerned. I am sure there is no disposition on the part of the Government or on the part of hon. Members of this House who feel strongly in the matter to demand reprisals. What we want is justice. I have been surprised to hear again and again in this House that the proposals in this Bill are provisions to satisfy the Nonconformists. As a Nonconformist I claim nothing except in my position as a citizen, and whatever I have a right to as a citizen I have no less or greater right to obtain as a Nonconformist. Therefore, it is as a citizen that I stand here and plead that this Bill is based upon justice. How does the right hon. Gentleman meet these demands in regard to the buildings. There is no disposition to confiscate property. When the conditions come to be examined I think it will probably be felt that the owners of schools have been dealt with most liberally. The cost of acquiring these schools or of building schools in their place has been greatly exaggerated, and I hope the House will not be deterred by financial considerations from dealing with this question in such a thorough manner as the needs of education require. I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has been able to secure £1,000,000 for acquiring these schools and for building others. We have some 3,000,000 children to provide for, or about half of the children of the nation. In the last twenty-five years we have provided for about one-half, and the children to be provided for now are chiefly in the rural districts, and the late Prime Minister once estimated the cost at not more than £7 per head. That would work out at something over £20,000,000 which could be borrowed upon liberal terms and would certainly not cost more than £1,000,000 a year even if the whole of these schools had to be rebuilt. As to public control, one would like to know more how it is to be developed before saying that it will accomplish all that is desired. The principle of devolution, I hope, will be adopted not in a partial, but a general sense. This will be necessary if it is to meet the needs of the administration of this measure, and especially if it is to re-enlist the interest of parents. I desire to refer to the admirable speech, both in tone and temper, made by the noble Lord opposite. I am sure that that speech reminded the older Members of this House of one of its most brilliant ornaments whom we miss in these debates—I refer to the noble Lord's brother, Lord Hugh Cecil, who, however much we may differ from him, always dealt with this subject upon the highest possible level. The difficulty I have in arguing this question with the noble Lord is, I fear, that we have nothing in common with him in regard to the basis of religion or spiritual life. It seems to me that he argues religion as divorced from the Bible. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] Yes, and I do not think he is alone in so doing. There are many authorities to justify that statement. We regard what the noble Lord calls religion as more or less ecclesiasticism and not the true spiritual religion which we feel no State can touch, and with which no State ought to interfere in any shape or form. The noble Lord put a question to Members on this side of the House "Do you think religion an essential part of education?" Of course we do. There are many Members on this side of the House who give a great deal of their time to the personal work of the religious instruction of the young. If I may make a personal allusion, I have been engaged for fifty years in this work, and therefore do not think lightly of religion as part of education, but what I do contend is that religion as such has no right to be taught, and cannot be taught, by the State. Undenominational religion, which has had so many sneers cast upon it in previous education discussions in this House, is in our judgment simply a question as to whether the Bible should be excluded from the schools, or have a place in the schools along with other books from which children may learn. If the Bible alone is likely to do children harm it had better be excluded from the schools altogether, but we feel that there is no such risk whatever. There is no reason why the Bible should be the one Book which the State should say shall not be introduced into the schools for reading by the children with such simple comments upon it as the teacher can give free from the ecclesiastical influences of the clergy of all denominations and any fear of proselytising. I cannot myself understand why a child should be taught that Julius Caesar lived and not that David lived. I cannot understand why a child may learn Homer, and not the Bible. Surely the Bible is at least the oldest literature in the world, and contains the highest standard of ethics. We say that the reading of the Bible is an invaluable adjunct to the education of the child. Therefore, while we agree with definite religious instruction we say that such instruction has no right in a State school. We have heard and shall hear a great deal about the rights of parents. I contend that parents have no rights in this respect. Where did the parent get the right to make me pay for teaching that salvation comes through the sacraments, and these through only one Church? This claim is a new one. There have been 8,000 villages where, whatever their rights, parents have had no opportunity of carrying them out, and the Church has said that the parents must either have the religion which they taught in the schools or no religion at all so far as the school was concerned. I therefore contend that this claim of right on the part of the parent is not a legitimate claim, and so far as the State schools are concerned cannot be maintained. Our Anglican and Roman Catholic friends have a perfect right to say that their children shall have this teaching, and I am sure that they will see that they have it. We, as Nonconformists, do not think less of this specific teaching than those denominations to whom I have referred, but we take other means of giving it, and we say that the State cannot

Mr. George White.

go further than the right hon. Gentleman has done in his Bill. There are as many children in the Sunday schools of the land to-day as in the public elementary schools. Surely the parents would discharge their duties in regard to religious teaching when specific teaching could not be given in the public schools. I cannot conclude without thanking my right hon friend not only for the provisions of the Bill, but for the noble sentiments he gave utterance to in asking leave to introduce it. I venture to say, while not pledging myself to every detail of the Bill, that the right hon. Gentleman has produced a Bill which cannot be called in every sense an education Bill, because it is to remove difficulties and obstacles which are at present placed in the way of education, and I believe he will thoroughly succeed in that object, and in so doing he will have the support of the country behind him. Then I hope he will go on to deal with the most important question of our training colleges. While our training colleges are subsidised to the large extent they are by public funds, and while a test for teachers remains, we shall have very great difficulty in this matter. I hope also that secondary education will have the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The first thing to be done is to remove difficulties out of the way, so that the education of this nation may have the free course which it would have had but for the religious obstacles which have stood in the way.

*MR. BIRRELL: I think that no advantage would arise from my entering any further into the details of the Bill than I have already done. It has been referred to as not being an Education Bill, and no doubt the first part of it, which I felt it my immediate duty to explain, is perhaps open to that imputation; but the second part, which deals with educational endowments, and the third part, which contains, I think, some very valuable educational provisions, will redeem the Bill from this charge when its various clauses come to be considered. I quite agree that the measure requires very careful study and consideration by persons whom its clauses very closely affect, and I think the best thing we can do is to allow it to be introduced, so that it may find its way into the hands of the printer as quickly as possible and be circulated among Members at all events on Wednesday next. The Easter holidays will soon be upon us, and the Bill will then receive the attention which it most certainly deserves. I think the Bill contains provisions which require to be looked at very carefully all round, and I shall be surprised if, when those provisions are looked at, a great many persons who are deeply interested in religious education in the country districts take a slighting view of the opportunities afforded them of teaching catechetically their definite religion as frequently in the week as they have ever been in the habit of doing. I think they will find, both in the council schools and in the transferred voluntary schools, full opportunities of teaching the children the religion of their parents. I listened to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone with the greatest attention. I share the regret expressed by my hon. friend that the noble Lord's brother is not by his side. I myself, at all events, do not wish the Bill to escape searching criticism, and no one could apply that more thoroughly from their point of view than the noble Lord and his brother, who is unfortunately for the present excluded from our debates. The noble Lord spoke of our forcing some new religion down the throats of parents who object to it. No Government could do anything of the kind. The whole basis of the Bill rests upon the assumption, which I believe to be a just one, that the great Protestant community of the country approve of the kind of religious teaching now given, whether in the council schools or the non-provided schools. I believe that that instruction is consonant with their wishes, and that any Government would be fools indeed if they attempted to force upon the parents of the country a religious instruction to which they were opposed. I shall circulate the Bill certainly by Wednesday, and I hope it will be found by Members on all sides that, whether they agree with it or not, it is an honest attempt to deal with a very great difficulty. I have received many deputations, but the one that affected me most closely was one from the Primitive Methodists. These persons are not among the high and mighty. They represent the working classes, and they all live in village districts. Their communicants number 200,000, and their attendants at least 400,000. They have chapels in 4,000 villages; but in only 850 villages is there any school but that of the Church of England for their children to go to. They did not speak with animosity towards establishments, nor were they animated by the spirit of political dissent; but they put before me a case which has been constantly admitted, but to meet which no attempt has been made on the floor of the House. Now the fortunes of Parliament have given this opportunity, and I think the Government are wise to avail themselves of it. This grievance ought to be removed as speedily as possible, and I believe that it can be done without substantial injury to the religious feelings of the community or to the opportunity of all Churches and denominations to give the children of their members definite, precise instruction in the creed of their fathers.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I rise to make only two remarks. The Party to which I belong do not propose to offer any opposition to the introduction of the Bill, but that must not be taken as expressing any approval of the measure, which embodies an unjustifiable attack on the voluntary school system. I hope the Second Reading will not be taken until there has been full opportunity of considering the measure.

MR. BIRRELL indicated assent.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Lough.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to Education in England and Wales," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, April 24th, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDER) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) immediately moved to report progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. L. Corbett.*)

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that the Bill had been discussed on the Second Reading and no great change was contemplated by its provisions.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: I believe there is an important Amendment on the Paper.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) rose to move an Amendment of which he had given notice.

THE CHAIRMAN said the Question before the Committee was the Motion to report progress.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 30; Noes, 210. (Division List No. 45.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt HnSirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn.Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt.Hn.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Doughty, Sir George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hervey,F.W.F(BuryS. Edm'ds.
Hunt, Rowland
Long, Rt.HnWalter(Dublin,S.)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Nield, Herbert
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. T. L. Corbett and Mr. Claude Hay.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Agnew. George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Benn, JohnWilliams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W(T'w'rHamlets,S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, ArthurW.(Bedfordshire
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Brigg, John
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Buxton, Rt.HnSydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Causton, Rt.HnRichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWm.J(S.Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H (Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H(St.Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gladstone, Rt.HnHerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Harmsworth, RL(Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, ColonelIvor(Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W. Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter

Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans'a
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Malley, William
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W.E.B (Bradford, E.)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro')
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton-und.-Lyne)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H (Somerset, E
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A (Elgin and Nairn)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PROCEDURE).

Standing Order No. 47 read as followeth:—Two Standing Committees shall be appointed for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, and to trade, shipping, and manufactures, which may by order of the House in each case, be committed to them; and the procedure in such Committees shall be the same as in the Select Committee, unless the House shall otherwise order; provided that strangers shall be admitted, except when the Committee shall order them to withdraw; and the said Committees shall not sit after a quarter past two of the clock whilst the House is sitting, without the order of the House: provided also that any notice of Amendment to any clause in a Bill which may be committed to a Standing Committee, given by any hon. Member of the House, shall stand referred to such Committee; provided also that twenty be the quorum of such Standing Committees.

And amended in line 7, by leaving out the words "a quarter past two," and inserting the word "three," instead thereof.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Ajourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 10*th April*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had received from the Judges appointed to try the several Election Petitions the following Report relating to the Election for the County of Westmoreland (Northern Division). In the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division.

The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, The Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Acts, 1883.

To the Right Honourable The SPEAKER of the House of Commons.

Election of a Member of Parliament for the Northern Division of the County of Westmoreland, holden on the 23rd day of January, 1906.

In the Matter of a Petition relating to the said Election presented to His Majesty's High Court of Justice on the 17th day of February, 1906.

The Hon. Henry William Edmond Pelly Fitzmaurice, commonly called The Earl of Kerry, Petitioner.

Liefchild Stratten Jones, Respondent.

We, Sir William Grantham, Knight, and Sir John Compton Lawrance, Knight, two of the Judges for the time being on the Rota for the Trial of Parliamentary Election Petitions in England and Wales,

Do hereby Report—

1. That an application for leave to withdraw this Petition was heard before us in open Court on Monday the 9th day of April, 1906.

2. That having heard Counsel on both sides and read the Affidavits of the Parties to the Petition their Solicitors and Election Agents We Ordered that the Petitioner should have leave to withdraw this Petition.

3. That in our opinion the withdrawa of this Petition was not the result of any Agreement, terms or undertaking, nor in consideration of any payment nor in consideration that the Seat should at any time be vacated nor in consideration of the withdrawal of any other Election Petition nor for any other consideration.

Dated this 9th day of April, 1906.

WM. GRANTHAM.
J. C. LAWRANCE.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords]. Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]-

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Bacup Corporation Bill, Cardiff Gas Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Great Eastern Railway Bill (King's Consent signified), Bill read the third time, and passed.

Todmorden Corporation Bill, read the third time, and passed.

Thornton Urban District Gas Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [Lords]; Shrewsbury Corporation Water Bill, read a second time, and committed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill, "To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888,

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

relating to Waterford," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Abercarn, Barry (Amendment), Bettwsycoed, Blaydon (Amendment), Calverley (Amendment), Farsley, Foots Cray (Amendment), Horsforth (Amendment), Market Harborough, and Wembley," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 162.]

Land Drainage Provisional Order Bill, "To confirm a Provisional Order under the Land Drainage Act, 1861, relating to lands in the parishes of Belton and West Butterwick, in the county of Lincoln (parts of Lindsey)," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 163.]

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the Edinburgh Corporation (substituted Bill), Petition for dispensing with Standing Orders in the case of the Petition of the Testamentary Trustees of the late Sir George Warrander, Sir James Miller, and the Governors of the Fettes Trust, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Sutton District Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Two Petitions from Norfolk, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Leith, against; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Laurencekirk, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Two Petitions from Glasgow, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Laurencekirk, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Hipperholme and Lightcliffe, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law, from Adlington; Alverstoke (two); Alwinton (two); Amport (two); Arborfield; Arkholme (two); Ashington; Ashley; Ashmanhaugh; Baldersby; Barkham; Basingstoke (two); Batley Carr; Battle; Bawdeswell; Beddingham (two); Beech Hill (two); Beedon (two); Bexley Heath (two); Birkenshaw; Birnwood; Blackburn (four); Bolton (two); Borley; Bournemouth; Braydestone; Bredon's Norton (two); Bridgewater (two); Bromley (two); Buckland; Burneston; Burnley; Bury (two); Bury St. Edmunds; Buscot; Calderbrook; Camborne; Cannington (two); Carmarthen; Chapel Allerton; Chebsey; Chiddingstone Causeway; Chippenham; Chitterne (two); Chobham (two); Chorlton cum Hardy; Cobham (two); Cockerham (two); Colden

Common (two); Coppall (three); Corbridge (two); Corfe; Cotes Heath; Crayford (four); Crosscrake; Culford; Curry Mallet; Darenth (two); Dearnley (two); Denham; Derby (two); Dinder (two); Ditchling (two); Dolphinholme; East Crompton; East Drayton; East Lockinge (two); East Stonehouse; Eastville with Midville; Eden Bridge (two); Edmonton; Eggington; Eglingham; Elland (two); Elson and Crofton; Elton; Erith (two); Evercreech; Ewell (two); Exeter; Ford; Forden; Friern Barnet; Frinton (two); Frodsham; Furnham; Gawber (two); Gawcott (two); Gildersome (two); Glascoed; Glascombe; Glooston; Goff's Oak; Goosnargh; Goosnargh with Whittingham; Great Braxted; Great Marton (two); Great Paxton (two); Great Stanmore; Greenham; Greenhithe (two); Greenton; Grimsby; Grindon; Groombridge (two); Gwehelog; Habergham Eaves, Burnley (two); Hadlow Down; Halstead; Hambleden (two); Hanney; Hardingham (two); Hardington; Harpurhey (three); Hawnby; Headley; Healaugh (two); Heaton Norris (two); Hedingham; Henstead; Hever (two); Higher Bebington; High Hoyland (three); Hildenborough (two); Hollington and Rodsley (two); Holme on Spalding Moor; Honing; Horbury; Horbury Bridge; Horningsham; Hulme (three); Hulme St. Philip's; Hungerford (two); Hunsworth; Hunton (two); Iffley (two); Ingham; Ingham and Timworth; Ireborough and Withiel Florey; Ivington (two); Kingsdown (two); Kinson; Kinwarton; Kirk Langley; Kirklington; Knutsford; Lache cum Saltney; Lancaster; Langleybury (two); Layer Marney (two); Leeds; Lesbury; Leatherhead; Leyland; Little Bolton; Littleborough; Little Minto; Llananno; Llanbadarnfynydd; Llanelly; Llanfairarybryn; Llanfrynach; Llanganten (two); Llantrithyd; Lock's Heath; Longcot (two); Long Newton; Luddenden (three); Manchester (two); Manfield (two); Mariansleigh; Marley Hill (two); Marthall; Marton (two); Meifod (two); Melling with Wrayton; Mesham; Mickleham (two); Miles Platting; Mowsley; Mytholmroyd (two); Neasden; Netherfield (two); Nether Knutsford; Nettlestead (two); Newington; Newton Heath (three); Normanton on Trent (two); North Cray; Oakworth (two); Old Newton; Old Windsor; Ordsall in Salford; Orpington (two); Over; Overton; Pangbourne; Pembroke (two); Pendlebury (two); Pendleton (two); Penn Street; Penshurst (two); Purley; Queen Camel; Radcliffe; Ranworth; Ravenhead, St. Helens; Ringsfield (three); Ripley (two); Riverhead (two); Rostherne; Rowner; Rushmere; Rusthall (two); Ryeworth; St. Chad; St. Giles in the Fields; St. Lawrence (two); Salford (four); Saltney; Sandhoe Beaufront; Sarisbury; Sawbridgeworth; Scarborough; Seal (two); Shipbourne (two); Shoreham (two); Sloley (three); Snetterton; Southborough (two); South Charlton; Southfleet; Southwell (two); Sowerby Bridge; Speenhamland (two); Speldhurst (two); Stalybridge; Stanningley; Stepney; Stockland; Stockport (two); Stourton Caundle; Stow Maries; Sulham (two); Sunderland (two); Sutton at Hone (two); Swanscombe; Swinton (two); Taf-fechan; Taunton; Tavistock; Tettenhall (two); Thames Ditton; Thatcham (two); Toddington; Tonbridge (two); Tonge; Trull; Tunbridge Wells (eight); Turnditch; Tynemouth; Ufton (two); Ulverston (two); Usk; Warrington; Warton; Wasing; West Gorton; Westhall; West Thorney; Weybridge; Wilmington; Winlaton; Wiston; Withington (three); Woodbartwich; Woolavington; Woolhampton; Woolston; Wynyard; Yarmouth (two); and, Yazor (two); to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Paper [presented 9th April] to be printed. [No. 118.]

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd April; Viscount Castlereagh]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119.]

FIRE BRIGADES AND FIRES, 1903.

Copy presented, of Return relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and

Wales for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the City and County of Bristol and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' and Hairdressers' Shops within the City and County [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.

Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended December 31st, 1905, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.) in which accounts were opened in the Books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120.]

EAST INDIA (TRADE).

Copy presented, of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1900–1901 to 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Statement of Moneys expended by Local Education Authorities under Part I. and Part II. of the Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF) (INTERIM STATEMENT).

Copy presented, of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Austria-Hungary, as modified by Commercial Treaties with Germany, Russia, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL EXPORTED.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th March; Mr. D. A. Thomas]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Hours of Duty of Scottish Prison Warders.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland how many hours duty per day and per week a prison warder in the Scottish prison service is expected to perform; whether the regulations prescribe any maximum number; and whether, in computing hours of duty, the time on escort duty is taken into account.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The average hours of duty of a prison warder in the Scottish prison service are about nine per day and about sixty-two per week. No maximum is prescribed by the regulations. With regard to taking into account the time on escort duty in computing hours of duty, the practice varies, but extra time is compensated for generally.

Irish Land Purchase—Sales of Irish Estates.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the purchase arrangements for the sale of the Heathfield estate, owned by Mr. Phibbs and situate near Collooney, county Sligo, have yet been sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, whether these arrangements contain a proviso for the reinstatement of John Kelly on the holding from which his father was formerly evicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the sale referred to has not been completed. An inspection has been directed, and the inspector has been instructed to inquire, amongst other things, into the case of John Kelly, whose name does not appear in the proceedings as a purchaser.

MR. O'DOWD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of years' purchase paid by the Congested Districts Board to Mr. Phibbs for his estate of Moylough, situated near Tubbercurry, county Sligo, and say whether the bog which forms a portion of the estate was included in the terms of sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) In this case the Congested Districts Board gave nineteen years' purchase of the first-term rents and twenty-three years' purchase of the second-term rents. A bog, 405 acres in extent, in the townland of Moylough was included in the purchase.

MR. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on the completion of the sale, under the Land Act of 1903, of a portion of the Beresford estate, Carlow County, the case of the Waters family, as evicted tenants, has been ignored, and the Estates Commissioners have sanctioned the sale of their holding of Kilcloney, Borris, to an occupier under the eleven months' system having no legal title; and, if not, will he say how the Kilcloney farm has been disposed of, and will the Waters family be reinstated in their former holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they are negotiating for the purchase as untenanted land,of the holding formerly occupied by Patrick Waters. If the purchase should be completed, the Commissioners will consider the question of reinstating Waters.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that Timothy Corbett, of Rathany, Knockany, county Limerick, was evicted from his farm on the estate of the Earl of Limerick over twelve years ago; that a planter named McGrath now holds that farm; that an application on behalf of Corbett's restoration has been sent to the Estates Commissioners; and will he use his influence with the Estates Commissioners in endeavouring to reinstate Corbett.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have recently received an application on Corbett's behalf, which will receive consideration in due course. The Commissioners are not yet aware of the facts of the case.

MR. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether Mrs. Bresnahan, of Ballinard, Herbertstown, county Limerick, applied to the Estates Commissioners for their aid in restoring her to her evicted farm on the Tuthill-Gab-Bett-Fitzgerald estate over which Mr. Tuthill, of Escar Lucan, county Dublin, is agent; and can he say whether there are at present any negotiations in progress for the sale of the estate; and whether he will recommend the Estates Commissioners to endeavour to arrange between Mr. Tuthill and Mrs. Bresnahan for sale and purchase on terms to be fixed by the Estates Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have had inquiries made into the case of Mrs. Bresnahan, who has lodged an application for reinstatement, and that they are in communication with the agent of the estate upon the subject.

MR. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that Thomas Molony was, a few years ago, evicted from his farm in Castlewaller, Newport, county Tipperary, by his landlord, Mr. John B. Barrington; has Mr. Molony applied to the Estates Commissioners asking their aid in effecting his restoration to the farm; and, now that the estate has been sold off to the tenants with the exception of this one tenancy, will the Estates Commissioners interpose and use their best offices in the reinstatement of Thomas Molony?

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no application for reinstatement has been lodged with them by or on behalf of Mr. Thomas Molony. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the eviction.

MR. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how matters at present stand as to the Mountshannon Estate, county Limerick; has the ownership yet passed from Mrs. Nevin to the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, will matters be expedited in the interests of the evicted tenants for whom it is intended, so that in the opening of the season they may be in a position to work the farms for meadowing, tillage, or grazing purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to my reply to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for West Limerick on Friday last. † I then explained the causes of the delay, and stated that the Commissioners are occupied with the matter.

Mr. LUNDON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement in his evicted farm from Michael Leahy, Ballykeeffe, Mungret, Limerick; is he aware that the heir of the planter, a Mr. Dowling, who took this farm, is now in the act of selling his interest in it; and will the Estates Commissioners take steps either to restore Leahy to his farm, subject to paying Dowling what money he expended on the farm, or induce Dowling to pay its full value, minus the sum which Leahy accepted under circumstances of poverty and duress.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have received an application for reinstatement from Michael Leahy, who states, however, that he received £100 as compensation from the new tenant of the farm from which he was evicted. The Commissioners are aware that the tenant's interest of the farm has now been advertised for sale, but no proceedings under the Land Purchase Acts have been instituted. The Commissioners do not regard the matter as one in which they have power to interfere.

Irish Representation on Canal Commission.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the desirability of appointing an additional member to the Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways, to represent Irish interests, before the Commission enter upon the consideration of the Irish portion of their inquiry.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have conferred with my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade upon this subject, and he informs me that he will consider the points raised in the Question, and that he hopes, when the Commission approach the Irish part of their inquiries, to submit to His Majesty for appointment as an additional member of the Commission another member representing Irish producers and traders interested in transportation questions.

Cost of Police Force in the Rathmines and Rathgar District.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement, on Wednesday last, of the chairman of the Rathmines urban district council that, while there were 156 police in the district in the year 1863 as against 134 in the extended district of Rathmines and Rathgar in 1901, the sum demanded by the Government in the latter year towards the cost of the force was over £5,000, as against £1,500 in 1863, and will he explain the cause of this increase; and whether, in view of the repeated and uncontradicted allegations as to the existence of a similar state of things in the rest of the Dublin metropolitan police district, the Government will take any steps in the immediate future to relieve the ratepayers of that area of the present police rate therein.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan police that there is no special police force for the Rathmines urban district, but the district forms part of a police division which includes the Pembroke urban district and part of county Dublin. There are no records which indicate the number of police exclusively employed in the Rathmines area, and as the police patrols of the different portions of the division overlap it would be impracticable to differentiate the force applied to each. The number of police employed in the various divisions of the Dublin metropolitan district varies from time to time according to police exigencies. I understand that the amount of the police tax for the Rathmines district for the years mentioned in the Question was substantially as stated. There has been no change in the rate of the police tax, viz., 8d. in the pound, since 1863, and the increase in the total amount levied is due to the enlargement of the area of assessment by the erection of new buildings. I have no information that a similar state of things exists in the remainder of the Dublin metropolitan police district. I understand that the question of reducing the police tax has been repeatedly considered by the Irish Government and the Treasury, but that it has been found impossible to make any reduction. It must be remembered that a considerable part of the cost of the force falls upon the Exchequer.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 887–8.

Postal Association—Protection of Officials.

Mr. J. HASLAM (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of his recognition of the rights of trade unionism in the postal and telegraph services, he will take steps to protect the local officials of the various organisations from persecution by their superior officers; whether in this connection he will ask for the production of the endorsement of the chief clerk at Chesterfield, in relation to a telegraphist named Smith at that office; and whether he will state what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have no reason to believe that any steps will be necessary in the direction indicated by the hon. Member, but if any case of alleged persecution is brought to my attention I will, of course, inquire into it. I have considered the case in the Question, and I do not find it necessary to take any action in the matter.

Transmission through the Post of Offensive Post-cards.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been directed to the report of a case tried before Mr. Justice Darling on the 20th December last in which evidence was given of the transmission through the Post Office of an offensive and libellous post-card; whether his attention has been directed to the report of a complaint made to the Ealing bench of magistrates on the 2nd instant by a person who had received through the Post Office a post-card containing an offensive expression; whether such deliveries of offensive post-cards are frequent, in spite of the provision of the Inland Post Warrant of 1903 giving the Post Office power to detain offensive matter and to prosecute the offender; and whether he will take measures to prevent this abuse of the Post Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The regulations strictly prohibit the transmission of postal packets having thereon any words, marks, or designs of an indecent, obscene, or grossly offensive character; and any packets which are observed to infringe those regulations are withheld from delivery. It is not, however, the duty of post office servants to read the communications on post-cards, and some cards bearing offensive communications may therefore escape notice and get delivered, though it is my desire as far as possible to prevent their transmission.

Delay in Completion of King's Road, (Chelsea), Post Office.

Mr. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the delay in completing the new post office in King's Road, Chelsea; what was the date of it being commenced; and when will it be opened.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The work in this case was, I believe, begun in February, 1905, but there has been delay in consequence of certain legal difficulties which arose in connection with part of the site. These have been settled, and the new office will, I hope, be ready for occupation in a few months.

Russian Retaliatory Import Duties.

Sir SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether in view of the fact that the Russian Government has imposed extra duties on Indian and Ceylon teas, by way of retaliation for the prohibition of Russian sugar by Great Britain, under the Brussels Convention, he can state if Russia has retaliated in any way against any of the other nations which were parties to the Convention; and, if not, why India, which was not a party to the Sugar Convention, should be singled out for vicarious punishment for Great Britain's action; and what steps His Majesty's Government propose to take for India's protection.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The reply to the first Question is in the negative. With regard to the second, His Majesty's Government have not been informed of the reason why Russia retaliated upon India and Ceylon and not upon the United Kingdom. With regard to the third, I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to him on the 22nd ultimo.†

Detention by the Italian Courts of Steamer "Briardale."

MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the case of the large British steamer "Briardale," which has been detained in the port of Genoa since March, 1905, under a sequestration order of the Italian courts, and that adequate bail has several times been offered by the owners so that the vessel could be released, and was refused; and whether, in view of the heavy losses already sustained by the owners, and likely to be augmented pending further legal proceedings, His Majesty's Government can intervene and make strong representations to the Italian Government, insisting upon bail being accepted and the release of the vessel.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The case of the "Briardale" has already been the subject of representation by His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome to the Italian Government on more than one occasion. His Majesty's Government have now under their earnest consideration the question of what further assistance can be afforded to the owners, with a view to bringing about a satisfactory settlement.

Popular Telephone Rates.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the speech made in Australia by the Postmaster-General of the Australian Commonwealth, at Sydney, on 3rd February, in which he expresses his conviction that he will be able to give every man in the country a telephone in his own house at a cost of one shilling a week; and whether he is considering the cost of reducing to popular rates telephone charges in this country.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The speech referred to by the hon. Member is probably that which was delivered at the annual picnic of the Electric Telegraph and Telephone Construction Branch Union at Sydney, and I gather from a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that Mr. Chapman did not explain the nature of the cheap telephone service to which he referred. I understand, however, from another source that the rate referred to by Mr. Chapman is to be the minimum charge in small towns for a limited number of calls made on a four-party line, *i.e.*, a line of which the use is shared by four subscribers. Additional calls beyond the minimum number would have to be paid for separately. I am looking into the present charges in this country, but it would not be possible to give an efficient service, with privacy, at the rate mentioned.

Drumlish Postal Deliveries.

MR J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the extra distance to be covered by the mid-day rural postman from Longford to Leitrim Crossroads, and thence to Drumlish, would be only about one and a half miles; and whether, for the sake of the extra pay this would cost, he still persists in his refusal to gran the mid-day extension to Drumlish.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In view of the circumstances with which I have already acquainted the hon. Member I fear I should not be justified in incurring any additional expenditure on the service to Drumlish.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 618.

Annual Leave of Adult Post Office Night Messengers.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General, if, having regard to the fact that the adult night messengers at Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Dundee, Belfast, and other provincial towns on full-night duty receive only twelve working days' annual leave, while unestablished officers on full-day duty receive fourteen working days' annual leave, and also to the effects of constant night duty on health, he will consider the advisability of granting to adult night messengers the same amount of annual leave as is given to those on day duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The annual leave proper to fully employed unestablished officers in the post office is twelve working days. Those who receive more obtained it before the present regulation came into force. I have no reason to believe that the employment of adult messengers on night duty is prejudicial to their health; and I may mention, incidentally, that at Manchester the night messengers have less sick leave than those employed in the day time.

Report of Bovine Tuberculosis Commission.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Report of the Commission on Bovine Tuberculosis will be issued; whether he can state the total expenditure on Royal Commissions up to the present; how many Commissions have been held, and date of appointment; and whether the Local Government Board have taken any steps to carry into effect the recommendations made by former Commissions.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) As regards a Report from the present Royal Commission, I am not able to add anything to what I said in Answer to a Question by the hon. Member on this subject on the 20th February last.† Including this Commission, there have been three Royal Commissions (one of which was dissolved on the death of the chairman and reconstituted) on subjects connected with tuberculosis in relation to food. The first Commission was appointed on 21st July, 1890, and was reconstituted on 15th November, 1894. The next was appointed on 6th July, 1896, and the last one on 31st August, 1901. The total expenditure on these Commissions up to 31st March last amounted to £48,400. The Commission of 1896 is the only one which has made recommendations as to administrative procedure. The Local Government Board have on more than one occasion issued circulars to the local authorities on the subject of these recommendations.

Persons Chargeable on the Rates—Cost of Preparing Statistics.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress have written to the clerks of unions in Ireland, requesting to be furnished with a census of the number of persons chargeable to each poor law union who were in receipt of poor relief on March 31st, 1906, together with certain particulars relating to such persons; whether clerks of unions and other officers, on whom the work of preparing the census would fall, are bound to supply the information required; and, if so, what remuneration the Commission propose to pay to such officers for the time and trouble involved.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The Answer to the first point in the Question is in the affirmative. The Commission are empowered, by the Royal Warrant constituting them, to call for the information necessary for the conduct of their important inquiry. I understand that they recognise that the furnishing of the information which may thus be required in the course of their inquiry may in certain cases impose such extra work upon the officers of local authorities as might justify a claim for special remuneration. If this is proved to the satisfaction of the Commission, they would propose to communicate with the Treasury on the subject.

Scottish Deer Forests.

Mr. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland what were the areas of the deer forests in Scotland for the years 1883, 1898, and 1905, respectively; and whether, in view of the effect of the extension of these areas, what steps, if any, it is proposed to take in the matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 214.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) Return 232 of 1905 gives all the information at present available. I am unable at present to make any statement in reference to the latter part of the Question.

Overcrowding in Glasgow and Dundee.

Mr. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, according to the recent investigations of Mr. Arthur Sherwell, one-third of the population of Edinburgh and one-half of the populations of Glasgow and Dundee live under conditions of overcrowding; and what steps, if any, it is proposed to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) In spite of inquiry it has not been found possible as yet to obtain any published result of Mr. Sherwell's investigations. If supplied with the data on which the Question is based it shall receive my consideration.

Infant Mortality in Scotland.

Mr. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary for Scotland what were the death-rates among infants less than a year old throughout Scotland as a whole, and in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee, respectively, for the year 1905; whether these death-rates are excessive; and what steps, if any, it is proposed to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The facts for the four burghs for the year 1905 are as follows:—Edinburgh, 124·8; Glasgow, 130·8; Aberdeen, 138·5; Dundee, 132·5. While these figures could hardly be called excessive as compared with those of other large towns in the United Kingdom, there is no doubt that it is possible to reduce them. It is hoped that the steady improvement in sanitation will conduce to this. In addition, steps have been taken in Glasgow and Dundee to deal directly with the question by the appointment of health visitors, lay and medical, and by the establishment of municipal depots for sterilised milk. Similar measures are under consideration in Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Scottish Civil Servants with Salaries exceeding £149.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the number of officials whose salaries are on the Civil Service Estimates for Scotland for the current year whose salaries exceed £149 per annum each, with the aggregate amount of those salaries, and the number of these officials who are Presbyterians born in Scotland, with the aggregate amount of their salaries.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I regret that the information desired is not available. All such salaries are not stated separately in the Civil Service Estimates, and the particulars of religion and place of birth are neither recorded nor known.

Suggested Grant to Widow of the late Charles Thornton, of His Majesty's Gunwharf.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been directed to the case of the widow of Charles Thornton, late senior smith in His Majesty's gunwharf, who, after thirty-two years' service, died on February 1st, 1905; and whether, in view of all the circumstances, it is possible to grant Mrs. Thornton, who is in poverty, some gratuity.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man died while in receipt of full pay, and, as his death does not appear to have been attributable to the nature of his duty, his widow is unfortunately precluded from receiving any grant from public funds.

Greenwich Hospital Grants for Naval Pensioners under Fifty-five Years of Age.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there is any immediate prospect of the Greenwich Hospital augmentation being awarded to pensioners of the Royal Navy who are over fifty-five years of age, and entitled to the increase of fivepence per day; and whether those who are not actually decrepit are, at present, regarded as ineligible for the pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) No pensioner can be regarded as "entitled" to Greenwich Hospital age pensions. The funds available for the pensions are fully appropriated to that purpose, and eligible men not in receipt of pensions can only be awarded them as vacancies occur on the list from time to time. It is therefore necessary to continue to select the oldest and most necessitous cases, but no man whose service qualifies him for the grant of a pension is regarded as ineligible. Although the number of pensions which will become available must necessarily vary to some extent according to the circumstances of the time, there is no prospect of a material increase being possible.

Repair of H.M.S. "Donegal" at Chatham.

MR. E. H. LAMB (Rochester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether H.M.S. "Donegal," which went ashore in the Red Sea and sustained such damage as to necessitate her return to this country, can be transferred from Devonport, where she has just arrived, and sent to Chatham for repairs, in view of the slackness of work at Chatham Dockyard, and the consequent contemplated discharges therefrom.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It has already been decided that H.M.S. "Donegal" is to be repaired at Chatham, and the necessary arrangements have been made accordingly.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates—Case of Rev. S. Jones.

MR. A. W. BLACK (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that on March 1st the Rev. S. Jones, Baptist Minister of Twickenham, unsuccessfully applied at Brentford for a vaccination exemption certificate; that the application was repeated on March 15th at his suggestion, when the certificate was again refused on the ground that the magistrates, by a majority, were opposed to it, although two of their number were prepared to sign it; and will he say what steps he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I received a letter from Mr. Jones in February last, but I did not suggest a fresh application to the justices. From the dates given it would appear that the hon. Member has in mind another case heard at the same Court, in which the question as to the views of a majority of the Justices arose. Upon this latter point I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member for the Ealing Division on the 5th instant.† I then stated that I was advised that where a majority of the Justices are not in favour of granting a certificate of exemption, it would not be proper for any minority to grant it, unless the other Justices present abstained from adjudicating in the case. As I then stated, the point is not one that I can decide, and in the circumstances there is no action which I could take with any advantage.

Reckless Motor Driving.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to stop reckless and furious driving of motor cars in Hampstead, especially Finchley Road and FitzJohn's Avenue.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The special attention of the police has been already directed to this matter.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any steps have been taken by the police to fine or caution the driver of motor car A 1022 for reckless driving at 10.40 a.m. on Friday, the 6th instant, in turning the corner at Netherall Gardens, Finchley Road; and, if not, will he state what action they propose to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Steps have been taken to find the owner of this car. The police did not witness the occurrence. When the owner is found they will in any case inform him of the complaint made against him, and they will be prepared to take proceedings if evidence is available in support.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 703.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state what action, if any, has been taken by the police against the driver of a motor car for recklessly turning the corner at Netherall Gardens, Finchley Road, on the 29th or 30th ultimo, resulting in damage to a butcher's cart and serious injury to the driver of the cart.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) It is proposed to take action against the driver. The accident was not witnessed by the police.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the maximum speed allowed to motor cars and motor 'buses in the London area; and how many motor car and motor 'bus accidents in the same area have been reported each month this year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The legal maximum speed for motor cars is twenty miles and for motor omnibuses twelve miles an hour. The number of accidents to persons or property known to the police to have been caused by motor cars (including cycles) during this year is, for—

January	301	Total, 949.
February	263	
March	385	

and those caused by motor omnibuses is for—

January	211	Total, 777.
February	235	
March	331	

Imprisonment for Non-payment of Fines.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that during the year 1904 no fewer than 107,625 persons were received in prison in default of payment of fines; and whether he will issue a circular to magistrates calling their attention to the provisions of Section 7 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, which sanctions the allowance of time for payment and payment by instalments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Yes, Sir. I have seen the figure quoted by the hon. Member. It is taken from the volume of Criminal Statistics recently published by my Department. In June last the Home Office issued a circular calling the attention of magistrates to the provisions of Sections 7 and 21 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, strongly urging that in proper cases defendants should be allowed time for the payment of fines or allowed to pay by instalments, and suggesting that, in some cases, this should be done even if no application is made by the defendant. I shall be glad to let the hon. Member have a copy of the circular. I do not think I can add anything to what was then said.

Unconvicted Persons Detained in Prison awaiting Trial.

MR. PICKERSGILL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that during the year 1904 no fewer than 367 persons, of whom forty-nine were eventually acquitted, were detained in prison before trial for upwards of twelve weeks, and that, in addition, 111 persons, of whom twenty were eventually acquitted, were detained in prison before trial for upwards of sixteen weeks; whether, in these circumstances, he will issue a circular to magistrates calling their attention to the provisions of the Bail Act, 1898; and whether he will also instruct every governor of a prison to inform the Home Office at once of any case where a prisoner is received into his custody on committal for trial, when the governor knows, or has reason to believe, that upwards of twelve weeks will elapse between the committal and the trial.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am well acquainted with the figures, quoted from the criminal statistics, to which the hon. Member calls attention, but I doubt whether I can usefully take the action which he suggests. The views of the Home Office as to the importance of allowing release on bail are well known to the magistrates; and, when inquiry is made in any individual case of long detention pending trial, the result is almost always to show that the case is one where the prisoner could not find sureties, and could not be realeased on his own recognisances without the certainty or probability that he would abscond before the trial. I will, however, consider whether any further action can be taken by the Home Office.

Imperial Expenditure on Education.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the expenditure, from Imperial sources, on primary education in England; what is the expenditure on secondary schools in England; and what is the rate per pupil in each case, according to average attendance and according to population.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The total estimated expenditure from Exchequer Grants for England and Wales on elementary education (including teachers' pensions) for the year 1903–4 was £9,798,512, equivalent to £1 17s. 9¾d. per unit of average attendance, and 5s. 10d. per head of population. The total grant to secondary schools for the same period amounted to £175,248, equivalent to £4 9s. 8½d. per each scholar upon whom a grant was paid, and 1¼d. per head of population.

Local Expenditure on Education.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether, as the preliminary Report of the Departmental Committee on Rates has not yet been presented, he will now furnish to the House a statement of the moneys expended on Education, under Part I. and Part II. respectively, of the Education Act, 1902, by each local education authority for the year 1904–5; and, so far as can be estimated, for the year 1905–6, showing the amount provided from Exchequer grants and from local rates respectively, and in each case the amount of the rate in the pound.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am to-day laying upon the Table of the House a Statement which will, I hope, comprise all the information referred to in the Question. It will, however, take several days to print, and cannot therefore be in the hands of Members before Easter, as I had hoped.

Promotion of Clerks in the Service of the Irish Land Commission.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that there are at present serving in the Irish Land Commission twenty assistant clerks who have completed the necessary number of years' service for eligibility for promotion to the second division; and, considering that forty second division clerks have recently been introduced into these offices, many of whom have had no previous official experience, can he undertake that no more second division clerks will be appointed without the claims of the assistant clerks being fully considered.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Such promotions are only sanctioned exceptionally upon the recommendation of the heads of departments and on the ground of special merit. Any such recommendations always receive the most careful consideration of the Treasury.

Irish Crown and Quit Rents.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total number of quit and crown rents accruing to the Government in Ireland, and to what purpose it has been allotted; whether he will arrange that this Irish money shall be devoted to Irish purposes; and whether he will consider the advisability of utilising it as a fund to enable reafforestation in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The quit and Crown rents accruing to the Crown in Ireland amount at present to about £32,700 per annum. This money forms part of the land revenues of the Crown, the surplus income of which is annually paid into Exchequer, as provided by the Crown Lands Acts, and goes in relief of general taxation in the United Kingdom and Ireland jointly. Any scheme of planting in Ireland would have to be considered on its merits, without regard to the Crown land revenues.

Returns of Irish Emigration.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will arrange that, as the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction partially perform the functions of a Board of Trade in Ireland, he will instruct them to prepare every month a list of emigrants from Ireland and the place of their destination.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to my reply to the Question of the hon. Member for East Clare on 21st March,† from which it will be seen that the Registrar General for Ireland will in future publish monthly Returns of emigrants.

Education of Irish Pauper Children.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can arrange that all children will be removed from the precincts of all workhouses; and whether he can have these children educated in schools established under the Industrial Schools Acts, the guardians to contribute to the support of such children.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I would ask the hon. Member to await the Report of the Poor Law Reform Commission which will shortly be received. I have no doubt that the subject of the Question has been considered by the Commission.

Education of Cripple Children in Irish Industrial Schools.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is against the policy of The Industrial Schools (Ireland) Act, 1868, or any Act amending or affecting the same to exclude crippled children from the benefits of an industrial education in such schools; whether rules have been framed for the exclusion of such children; and, if so, will such be rescinded.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many schools there are in Ireland in which cripples receive an industrial education, and under what management; and whether he will frame rules or, if necessary, introduce legislation enabling local authorities or other competent authority to establish schools for such children on the same lines and same policy now in force under The Industrial Schools (Ireland) Act, 1868.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The primary object of the Industrial Schools Acts is to provide industrial training for the classes of children to which the Acts apply, and there is nothing to prevent crippled children from being sent to an industrial school, provided that they are not so crippled as to be physically unfit for industrial training. No rules are in existence in Ireland providing for the exclusion of such children, and the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools informs me that, at present, there are thirty-seven children crippled in various degrees who are undergoing industrial training suitable to their cases in twenty-three industrial schools in Ireland. Of these schools twenty-one are under Roman Catholic, and two under Protestant management. I am informed that there is also one other school in Ireland in which cripples receive industrial training, viz., the Cripples Home, Bray. I have no information as to the management of this school. I am not aware that it has been shown that legislation is needed.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants on the Estate of Mr. Lamphiere.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that a definite undertaking was given by Mr. Lamphiere and his agent during the recent sale of that estate to the tenants, that Mr. James Feehan, and Mr. Patrick Cormack, evicted tenants, would be reinstated; that this undertaking was given in the presence of Mr. Ashby, J.P., a tenant on the property, and that Mr. Justice Meredith made an order on a case connected with this estate to the effect that the £700, the purchase money of the farms claimed by Feehan and Cormack, should be retained by the Estates Commissioners until further instructions; will he say if the Commissioners have advanced any money to the present occupant of the evicted farms for the purpose of sale; are the Estates Commissioners aware that the lands in question were let on the eleven months' grazing system, and that no permanent tenancy had been created previous to the passing of the Land Act of 1903; and will he state what steps the Estates Commissioners intend taking to secure the due fulfilment of the undertaking given by the landlord and his agent regarding the reinstatement of the evicted tenants on this estate.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 356.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that applications for reinstatement were lodged with them by James Feehan and Patrick Cormack, who claimed to be reinstated in the former holdings of Denis Feehan and Elizabeth Cormack on the estate in question. The Commissioners made inquiries into the matter, and ascertained that the former tenants were not evicted tenants. They had both received monetary compensation from the landlord for the voluntary surrender of their holdings. The Commissioners are informed that upon the sale of the estate the vendor stated that he would raise no objection to Feehan and Cormack being placed in the respective farms, provided that advances yielding annuities of £5 and £15, respectively, were made. These annuities, however, were not agreed to, and the proposed arrangement fell through. The sale of the estate has since been completed, and the plots claimed by the applicants were sold to, and vested in, one James Cormack on June 22nd, 1905. So far as the Estates Commissioners are concerned the matter is closed; but, on the application of Feehan and Cormack, and with the consent of the parties, a sum of £700 has been retained out of the purchase money of the estate by the Judicial Commissioners until he shall make a further order on the subject.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants.

Mr. LONSDALE: (Armagh, Mid.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that persons placed in possession of parcels of land in the character of evicted tenants have disposed of the land at a profit; and whether steps will be taken to prevent the growth of a system of land jobbing under the Land Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estate Commissioners inform me that only one case has come to their notice in which a person placed in possession of a parcel as evicted tenant has sold the holding. As I have already informed the hon. Member, the Commissioners have no power to interfere with the sale by a tenant purchaser of his holding, and there seems no reason why such powers should be given to them.

Re-valuation of Dublin City.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a revaluation of Dublin city is about to take place; whether the Government intend to assimilate the procedure with that of Great Britain, by appointing local assessment committees to act in conjunction with the Commissioner of Valuation; and whether he is aware that the Dublin Corporation has twice passed resolutions against revaluation under the present system.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Revaluation was asked for by the Corporation of Dublin shortly after the passing of the Dublin Corporation Act of 1900, and no communication has since been received from the Corporation objecting to the valuation being proceeded with. Legal difficulties, however, have intervened, and at present I am unable to say definitely when the revaluation will be begun.

Number Badge of Station Sergeants in the Dublin Metropolitan Police.

Mr. O'DOWD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state why station sergeants in the Dublin metropolitan police do not wear numbers on the collars of their tunics when on duty in the streets of the city.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that station sergeants of the Dublin metropolitan police perform duty in the streets only on very exceptional occasions, in the absence of an inspector. They wear a distinctive uniform, and as there is no difficulty whatever in establishing their identity, if necessary, the

Chief Commissioner is of opnion that no reason exists why police officers of this rank should wear numbers on their collars.

Primary Education in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (1) when do the Commissioners of National Education propose to carry out the recommendation of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Primary Education in Ireland, volume 1, page 531, that the existing provincial model schools should be gradually discontinued; (2) how many of the 1,961 national schools for boys only would be reduced to an average below fifty by the operation of Rule 127b; how many to forty or under; how many to thirty or under; (3) is there anything which prevents the National Board from consulting the representatives of managers and teachers of primary schools when making or repealing its rules; (4) if not, how often in the last five years were these representatives consulted; (5) how many of the Commissioners of National Education were students of Trinity College; (6) and how many passed through the Queen's Colleges.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The recommendation referred to in the Question is as follows:—104. That the existing provincial model schools should be gradually discontinued. This is followed by another recommendation, as under: 105. That all existing provincial model schools, which cannot be carried on by local committees as elementary schools on the present system, receiving only such sums as may be earned by their scholars on examination, or may be due to teachers, may be granted on lease to anybody applying for them as training schools, on easy terms such as will provide for their maintenance and repair. The Commissioners of National Education inform me that model schools have been aided like ordinary elementary national schools since 1900, and there is now no substantial difference between model schools and ordinary national schools vested in the Commissioners. The Commissioners have, from time to time, since the date of the Royal Commission referred to, closed several of the departments of the provincial model schools which they found were not required for the purposes of primary education, and they will continue to do so whenever necessary; but they have no present intention, in view of the circumstances above stated, to discontinue the provincial model schools generally. (2) If Rule 127b were enforced without reservation in the case of each of the schools referred to, it is possible that 202 would have the average attendance reduced somewhat below fifty, that 229 would have the average reduced to forty or under, and that 289 would have the average reduced to thirty or under. But Rule 127b is not enforced in the case of schools in which pupils under seven years of age have not been enrolled since the 1st July, 1905, and there may not have been any enrolments of the kind in many of the schools since that date. Further, the rule is not enforced in any case where there is the danger of loss of an assistant, and it is not enforced when there is no suitable school in the locality for boys under seven years of age. These reservations affect the application of the rule materially, and would render a detailed examination of each of the 1,961 case alluded to in the Question necessary before any statement, even approximating towards accuracy, could be made as to the effect of the rule. (3) and (4). There is nothing to prevent the National Board from consulting the representatives of managers and teachers when making or repealing rules if they consider such consultation necessary, and, as a matter of fact, such consultations have been held by the Board through the Resident Commissioner. Deputations of managers or individual managers can at any time confer with the Resident Commissioner who attends at the Education Office daily, or appointments can be made for interviews on educational matters by letter. It is also known that individual members of the Board confer with managers and others concerned in education when important changes of rule are pending. But the Commissioners as a body do not confer with managers or teachers, nor do they consider it necessary to do so. The Commissioners always consider representations made to them by school managers or managers' associations in regard to their rules and regulations and adopt suggestions made of which they approve. Many such representations have been made to the Commissioners from time to time. The Commissioners further invite school managers to furnish them with an Annual Report in which the managers can express their opinions in regard to any matter connected with their schools or make suggestions for improvement of their schools. (5) and (6). There is no official information available on this subject.

Sales of Irish Estates.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Sheane estate, Cappanaclougher, Abbeyleix, Queen's County, has been withdrawn from the Land Judge's Court; and, if so, whether any steps are being taken with a view of sale to the tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The registrar of the Land Judge's Court informs me that the lands of Cappanaclougher were never the subject of proceedings for sale in that Court, though other portions of the Sheane estate were. The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of any proceedings for sale of the property.

Mr. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names, addresses, dates of eviction, and religion of the tenants evicted from their holdings, within the last twenty-seven years, on the De Vesci estate, Abbeyleix, Queen's County; how many of those farms are in the hands of planters; and what is the religion of the latter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received nine applications for reinstatement from persons claiming as representatives of evicted tenants from the estate of Lord De Vesci, Queen's County. It appears from these applications that eight of the holdings are occupied by tenants, and that the remaining holding is in the owner's occupation. The Commissioners have no information as to the religion of either the evicted tenants or of the present occupants. To give the other particulars requested in every case in which they might be asked for would seriously add to the Commissioners' labour, and retard their proper work.

Mr. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether proposals for sale to the tenants of the M'Neale (Minors) Estate, near Portarlington, Queen's County, have been received by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, whether he will see that such sale be not sanctioned unless the Clonkeen portion of the property is included.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. The Estates Commissioners are unable to make any statement as to what they may decide in a case which has not come before them.

Average Attendance at Irish Urban and Rural National Schools.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, (1) what is the average daily attendance in urban and in rural national schools, and the respective urban and rural populations served by such schools respectively; (2) how many monitors are there in ordinary national schools; (3) what is the proportion of monitors to the average daily attendance; (4) (a) how many rural model schools are there in Ireland, (*b*) and the average daily attendance therein; (5) how many pupil teachers in model schools, and what is the proportion of pupil teachers to average attendance, and (6) the cost per pupil teacher; (7) how many pupil teachers trained during the last five years, and how many of these now teach in national schools; (8) and what is the cost per monitor in ordinary national schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the following are the facts, according to the latest available Returns—

	Average Daily Attendance.	Population Census, 1901.
Urban Districts - - - - - -	169,041	1,419,009
Rural Districts - - - - - -	314,856	3,039,766

(2) Number of monitors in ordinary schools (*i.e.*, excluding model schools), 3,112. (3) Proportion of monitors to the average attendance, 1 to 150. (4) (a) There are no rural model schools; all the model schools are in cities or town; (b) the average daily attendance at the model schools, 6,650. (5) Number of pupil teachers in model schools, 172. Proportion of pupil teachers in model schools to the average attendance in such schools, 1 to 39. (6) Cost per pupil teacher who completed his service, about £58. (7) During the past five years 549 pupil teachers were appointed. During the same period 81 pupil teachers entered the service as teachers without further training, and 340 entered the training colleges with a view to becoming teachers subsequently. (8) Each monitor who completes his service receives as salary during that period £49, and each monitress receives as salary, for full period of service, £45.

Killadooly Evening School Grant.

Mr. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the evening school session in Killadooly boys' school, Ballybrophy, Queen's County, terminated on the 9th March last, and the final inspection was held on the 2nd March, and that the grant has not yet been paid; and, seeing that similar delay has occurred in connection with other schools in the neighbourhood, can he say what has caused the delay; and whether he will see that payment is made to the teachers as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that there has been no delay in the payment of capitation grants to evening schools. Payment has been made in the case of the Killadooly school. There are fourteen evening schools in Queen's County. In the case of ten, payment has been made; returns as to three are being awaited; and in the remaining case a question as to the non-observance of rules has arisen.

Beresford Estate Evictions.

Mr. HAMMOND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a family named Watters suffered eviction on the Beresford Estate at Kilcloney, county Carlow, in the year 1892; that the evicted farm of the Watters has been lately grazed on the eleven months' system by a man named O'Neill; that the estate is at present being sold under the Land Purchase Act of 1903; will he say whether an application for occupation and purchase has been received by the Estates Commissioners on behalf of O'Neill; whether the evicted farm is found by the Estates Commissioners as a parcel of untenanted land under the meaning of the Purchase Act; whether an application for reinstatement and purchase has been received by the Estates Commissioners on behalf of the Watters family; and, if so, will this family be reinstated in their old home.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his previous Question on this subject.

The Eviction of Terence Reilly.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any application has been received from Terence Reilly, an evicted tenant, for restoration to his farm in Abbeylara parish, North Longford; and whether he can hold out any hopes that this man will be relieved in the near future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received an application for reinstatement from Terence Reilly, whose former holding is now in the occupation of another tenant. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with the present tenant, but they will consider Reilly's application in the event of their acquiring untenanted land in the locality

Supply of School Requisites.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the reason why the free grant of school requisites has not yet been made to the six Catholic schools in the parish of Clonguish, county Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the requisites in question are being distributed to schools in the order in which the applications for them were received. The requisites for the schools at Clonguish were sent out on the 7th instant in order of priority.

The Eviction of Joseph Mullooly.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps are being taken to restore to Joseph Mullooly, senior, and Joseph Mullooly, junior, to that part of the land of Rathcline parish from which they were evicted some years ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that applications for reinstatement have been received from Joseph Mullooly and Mrs. Bridget Mullooly. The holdings from which they were evicted were sold under the Land Acts in 1898. Each of the applicants is in the occupation of another farm, and the Commissioners have not so far taken any action upon their applications.

Junior Assistant Mistresses—Age Limit.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the proposed appointment of junior assistant mistresses in boys' National Schools in Ireland, to state if the limit of age fixed for the candidates is from eighteen to thirty-five, their qualifications the same as those for manual instructresses, their salary £24 per annum without any prospect of increase and no pension; what special training will be required by these candidates; is there any precedent for the appointment of such mistresses; and whether, seeing that £24 a year is not an adequate salary for a young woman of eighteen to thirty-five years of age who has spent eighteen years of her life in the pursuit of education, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the limits of age of junior assistant mistresses are eighteen and thirty-five; the fixed salary is £24 per annum; and there is no pension. No special training is prescribed. Candidates are appointed on probation, and are required to undergo examination at the next following Easter after appointment. Junior assistant mistresses who display ability are, after three years' service, eligible for appointment as assistant mistresses at a salary of £44 per annum and additional capitation grant. The Commissioners add that the post of junior assistant mistress has proved a very attractive one, and there is no lack of candidates for the appointments.

Building of Labourers' Cottages at Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say how much of the shilling in the pound has been spent by the different unions in the city and county of Limerick for the building of cottages and acquiring plots of land for the labourers; and whether any of the unions are at present carrying through a scheme for the building of such cottages; what is the weekly rent for each cottage and half-acre plot, as well as for each cottage and acre plot, in the different unions; and how many of these cottages are there in each union in the county.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) A Parliamentary Return which is being prepared pursuant to an order of the House of Commons, dated 13th March 1906, will give the information asked for in the first part of the Question. The further particulars asked for are not at present available, but the Local Government Board will be prepared to give them when the annual returns for the year now ended have been furnished by the clerks of rural district councils.

Salaries of Irish Assistant Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the amount which would be annually required to pay second grade salary to assistant teachers in Irish National Schools who have given ten years' efficient service; and whether, in view of the qualifications and training of these public servants, and of the salaries they receive, he will take steps to secure the sum required for the purpose out of the Development Fund.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the amount which would be required in the case supposed could not be stated without the preparation of a Return involving considerable labour. Assistant teachers are, as a rule, uniformly paid third grade salaries, and under the former regulations they were, as a rule, paid third class salaries only. They cannot receive higher salaries than third grade unless they become principal teachers. If the suggestion made in the Question were adopted, the result would be, the Commissioners inform me, that some principal teachers would be paid third grade salary only, while many assistant teachers would receive second grade salary.

Sale of Farm at Knockanore, Kilrush.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the tenants' interest in a farm at Knockanore, Kilrush, county Wexford, from which certain tenants were evicted some years ago, is about to be sold by public auction on Thursday 11th April at Enniscorthy; and if the Estates Commissioners will take whatever steps are necessary to get possession of the farm, with a view to restoring it to the original tenants, in view of the fact that the estate on which this farm is situated is about to be sold under the Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners have no information as to the farm referred to in the Question. It does not appear that any proceedings for sale of the property are pending before the Commissioners, and, as the holding for sale appears to be held under a yearly tenancy, the Commissioners do not consider that they have any power to make an advance, or to expend money out of the reserve fund, for the purchase of the tenancy.

Irish Civil Servants with Salaries not exceeding £149.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of officials whose salaries are on the Civil Service Estimates for Ireland for the current year whose salaries exceed £149 per annum each, with the aggregate amount of those salaries, and the number of these officials who are Catholics born in Ireland, with the aggregate amount of their salaries

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) To ascertain the number of officials whose salaries exceed £149 would be a very long process requiring the sending of circular to every department. The Irish Government have no information as to the religion of officials, and it would be entirely contrary to practice to seek to obtain such information.

Failure to Summon Delegate to Meetings of Londonderry and Lough Swilley Railway Adjustment Board.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. James F. O'Donnell, J.P., was appointed a delegate under the Londonderry and Lough Swilley (Burtonport Extension) Railway Adjustment Order of the 5th March, 1904, by the Glenties Rural District Council in April, 1904, January, 1905, and January, 1906, and that the clerk to the council has called the attention of the company to the fact that, during this period, Mr. O'Donnell has received no notification of the time and place of the holding of general meetings of the company at which business relating to the Burtonport extension was considered; and whether the Board of Works will obtain from the company an explanation of their failure to summon the delegate as required by the Order.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Local Government Board that the Order referred to, which is dated 1st March, 1904, requires the Glenties Rural District Council to elect a delegate, but neither the Local Government Board nor the Board of Works have any information as to the person appointed or as to the alleged failure of the company to give notification of the time and place of general meetings. I understand that the Board of Works have no power to compel the company to summon a delegate, but that the matter lies between the local authorities and the company.

Appointment of Agricultural Instructors —Donegal.

Mr. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a statement from the County Council of Donegal relative to the question of the appointment of natives of the county as instructors under a scheme of agricultural and technical instruction; what is the present position of this question; and will he request the Committee appointed to examine into the working of the Department of Agriculture to hold a sitting at Lifford, as desired by the county council.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received the statement referred to. I understand that there has been no change in the situation since my Answer to the Question of the hon. Member for South Donegal on 6th March.† The question whether the Committee of Inquiry will deal with the matter is one for their own discretion, but I am willing to transmit to them any suggestion the hon. Member may give me.

Poor Relief.

Mr. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the increasing difficulty experienced by local bodies in the poorer parts of Ireland in doing their duty towards the sick poor, the aged, and other helpless classes, owing to the growth of the rates; and whether the Government intend to introduce any legislation on the lines recommended by the special Report of Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Lord Blair Balfour appended to the Report of the Royal Commission upon local taxation.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) There is no doubt much to be said in favour of the hon. Member's suggestion, but the question is one which affects the whole United Kingdom, and proposals on the lines indicated in the Question would probably be warmly contested.

Wages of Labourers at Waltham Abbey and Enfield Ordnance Factories.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in consideration of the fact that the wages of the labourers at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, have been increased from 21s. to 23s. per week, he will increase the wages of the labourers employed in the ordnance factories at Waltham Abbey and Enfield Lock to the same extent.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The Question is under consideration.

Sale of Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory.

Mr. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): To ask the Secretary of State for War the names of the gentlemen to whom the Sparkbrook factory was sold; the amount for which it was sold; the date of the agreement for sale; the value at which it stood in the books at that time; the number of rifles manufactured there in the last complete year before the sale; the average cost of each rifle; the number of rifles to be delivered to the Government annually by the present owners of Sparkbrook; and the price per rifle agreed to be paid to the company.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The agreement for the sale of the factory has not yet been signed, and it would, therefore, be premature to give a reply to the Question of my hon. friend.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 309-311.

Forfeiture of Militia Bounty by Joseph Farrell.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the bounty of Joseph Farrell, a militiaman in the 6th Battalion Rifle Brigade was stopped for a trifling error; and whether he will direct this man to be now paid, in view of his poverty.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man submitted his life certificate with a forged signature and the military authorities in Ireland ordered the forfeiture of the non-training bounty which was due on 1st October, in accordance with the regulations. There would not, therefore, appear to be any grounds for adopting the hon. Member's suggestion.

Refusal to Grant Portion of Pension to Daniel Harvey.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the War Office to grant his quarter's pension to Daniel Harvey, of Longford, because he was three hours late at gun practice owing to the distance he had to travel by train; and will he revise this order and direct Harvey to be paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) My attention has already been called to this matter by the hon. Member, who has been informed by letter of the true facts of the case, and that the Army Council upheld the decision to forfeit the portion of the man's reserve pay affected. To this information I have nothing to add.

Weekly Payment of Army Pensions.

MR. GIBB (Middlesex, Harrow): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the effect of the present system of paying Army pensions quarterly or monthly upon thriftlessness and pauperism among ex-soldiers, arrangements can be made for the payment of such pensions weekly

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The whole question of the mode of payment of Army pensions is now receiving careful consideration.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Conference at Algeciras and the Anglo-French Treaty.

MR. C. D. SCHWANN (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether one of the results of the Conference at Algeciras has been the virtual suppression of the clause in the Anglo-French Treaty which restricted the economic equality of all the Powers in Morocco to thirty years.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Anglo-French declaration of April 8th, 1904, to which the Hon. Member no doubt refers, does not say that the economic equality of all the Powers in Morocco is to cease after thirty years. The mutual engagements entered into by the British and French Governments under that declaration are in no way modified, still less suppressed, by the stipulations of the convention signed at Algeciras.

MR. C. D. SCHWANN: Do I understand that the same result will take place as took place in the case of Madagascar?

SIR EDWARD GREY: My hon. friend must take the language of the Declaration as it stands; it does not imply that.

Sale of Glebe Land.

MR. ROBERT PRICE (Norfolk, E).: I beg to ask the hon. Member for East Bristol, as representing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whether he is aware that in 1903 the Commissioners sold nineteen acres, one rood, nine poles of glebe land belonging to the benefice of Brushford, Somersetshire, to Mr. G. F. Sydenham for £1,300, or about £67 per acre, although about seven acres of glebe land adjoining had been sold in 1872 to a railway company for £1,280, or about £183 per acre; and whether, before completion in July, 1904, part of the land had been resold and houses were being built thereon, and that, within three months of completion, six acres, twenty-two roods of the land, costing Mr. Sydenham about £410, were sold at public auction for £749; whether he is aware that the purchaser from the Commissioners, Mr. Sydenham, was attorney for his father, the then incumbent of the benefice, and at that time suffering from senile decay and unable to manage his own affairs, and that Mr. Sydenham was both acting vendor and actual purchaser; and will he say whether the Commissioners were aware at the time that the land was capable of being sold as building land and that the purchaser was managing the affairs of the incumbent; whether they made any local inquiries as to the facts; and, if so, from whom; and whether it is the custom of the Commissioners to have a report from a local valuer before making sales of this description.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): The nineteen acres, one rood, nine perches of glebe land were sold by the late Rector of Brushford in 1903 with the consent of his patron (whose estate adjoined the land) and the approval of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for £1,300, but in addition a tithe rent charge of the commuted amount of £4 6s. 10d. per annum became on the sale payable by the purchaser to the imcumbent of the benefice. The Commissioners know nothing of the circumstances of the sale thirty years previously to a railway company nor of any re-sale of a portion of the nineteen acres by the purchaser. The proposal for the sale of the nineteen acres purported to be signed by the late rector himself and it was forwarded to the Commissioners by a local solicitor acting for him. The Commissioners were not informed that the purchaser held, as is alleged, a power of attorney for the transaction of the rector's business on his behalf, nor had they any knowledge of the rector's state of health. The Commissioners were advised by their own surveyors and refused the price first offered by the purchaser, but approved the proposal on the offer of an increased price, at which their surveyors were of opinion that the sale might be allowed in the interests of the benefice. It appears to me personally, unfortunate that the identity of name of the incumbent with that of the purchaser was not more fully noticed.

Union of the Rectories of St. Michael's, Cornhill, and St. Peter-le-Poor.

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): On behalf of the hon. Member for Denbighshire, W., I beg to ask the hon. Member for East Bristol, as Church Estates Commissioner, whether his attention has been drawn to a scheme made by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the union of the rectories of St. Michael's, Cornhill, and of St. Peter-le-Poor, in the city of London; whether he will state what the population of the united benefices will be, and what will be the value of the united benefice, including the rent of the house formerly used as the parsonage house; whether the scheme permits the incumbent of the united benefices to be non-resident; whether he will state upon what basis the pension of the retiring incumbent has been calculated; and whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are prepared to consider a modification of the financial arrangements of the scheme.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The aggregate population of the parishes (according to the census of 1901) is 488; the population of the united parish will be somewhat less, as a portion of the parish of St. Peter-le-Poor is to be added to the contiguous parish of All Hallows, London Wall. The income of the rectory of St. Michael, Cornhill, is now £1,578 (including the rent of the parsonage house). The income of the united benefice will be £750, and in addition, so long as the incumbent shall not be required to reside in the parsonage house (which is now let for £550 per annum), he will receive the rent thereof. The scheme contains no other provision in relation to the residence of the incumbent. The amount of the pension provided for the incumbent of the benefice of St. Peter-le-Poor with St. Benet Fink in the event of his retiring for the purpose of brining the union into effect is the amount of the annual income of his benefice. In view of the great benefits to the Church in some populous suburban districts which will result from the proposals contained in the scheme, the completion of which has already been delayed by unavoidable causes, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would deprecate any suggestion for a variation of its terms to which the consents of all parties have been given.

Any variation would involve the reconsideration and consent of all the parties to the scheme.

Skinned Lands at Garrabost.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the conditions under which skinned lands, that is land from which the peats have been removed, have been offered to the crofters of the township of Garrabost, Island of Lewis, for the purpose of enabling the crofters to enlarge the agricultural land of their crofts.

THE SECETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): No conditions, I am informed, were attached to the use of the skinned lands, except equal division.

Election of School Boards.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the failure of an election for a School Board in the parish of Lochs, Island of Lewis, is attributable to the notice of the election not having been posted on the school door sufficiently early to admit of the nomination papers reaching the returning officer by the date specified, will he state who is responsible, and what steps have been taken to obviate a similar irregularity hereafter.

MR. SINCLAIR: I beg to refer the hon. Member to Sections 6 and 8 of the General Order regulating the triennial election of School Boards (a copy of which has been sent to him). I have no information that the returning officer has failed to comply with the requirements contained therein.

MR. WEIR: I asked the right hon. Gentleman a specific Question. I asked who was responsible; this document with which I am furnished at the last moment does not give me the information I want.

*MR. SPEAKER Order, order; the hon. Member appears to be making a speech.

MR. WEIR: I do not desire to do that, Sir. What I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman is that he would give a specific Answer to that specific Question. Will he state who is responsible.

MR. SINCLAIR: Will the hon. Gentleman put down a separate Question with regard to that.

Sanitary Condition of the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Dr. Dittmar, in his Report on the sanitary condition of the island of Lewis, states that, with three exceptions, every house in the township of Arnol, parish of Barvas, is grossly insanitary, and could be certified as a nuisance under the Public Health Act; and, seeing that it is now a year since this Report was made, will he state what action has been taken in the matter, especially having regard to the fact that the township contains a population of 347, all of whom might at any moment become the victims of an epidemic of typhus or typhoid fever.

I beg also to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Dr. Dittmar, in his Report on the sanitary condition of the Island of Lewis, states that the water supplies in the whole of the island, with few exceptions, consist of shallow dip wells, liable to all kinds of surface pollution, and in the case of typhoid fever certain to be contaminated by drinking vessels from infected households; and will he state what action it is proposed to take to place the water supply for the island on a satisfactory basis, especially having regard to the fact that a recent outbreak of typhoid fever at Habost, Ness, Lewis, in which seventy-five persons were affected, is attributable to the water supply being contaminated.

MR. SINCLAIR: These two Questions may be answered together. As the hon. Member already knows, the Government is well aware of the facts detailed in Dr. Dittmar's Report, generally, as well as in regard to the points mentioned in these Questions; every endeavour is being made to prepare plans for the improvement of existing conditions, which are the growth and accumulation of years.

Dismissal of Mr. Menzies.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the chief inspector of schools, on his visit to Gartmoor on 20th March, succeeded in inducing the school board to rescind their resolution dismissing Mr.

Menzies, or what other steps the Education Department have taken or contemplate taking in the matter.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The chief inspector at his visit, though he failed to induce the school board to rescind the resolution dismissing Mr. Menzies, seems to have succeeded in reducing the question at issue between the parties to that of the terms of an apology. The department is now in further communication with the board.

The Royal Canal.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what communications, if any, were addressed by the Board of Trade to the Midland Great Western Railway Company, pursuant to the Reports of the board's inspectors on the condition of the Royal Canal; and will he explain why the Board of Trade held inquiries, in view of the expense to those who obtain it and to the State, if the board are unable to give effect to the recommendations of their own inspectors and to protect this public waterway from destruction.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): I am making inquiries into this matter, and if the hon. Member will put a further Question after Easter I will give him an Answer then.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade having regard to the facts that the Royal Canal was constructed as a waterway for public use, largely with moneys voted by the Irish Parliament, was subsequently acquired by the Midland Great Western Railway Company, subject to the statutory obligation of maintaining the canal in a navigable condition for public use, that the railway company in their own interest have allowed the canal to become unnavigable, and that all these facts have been ascertained and reported by inspectors of the Board of Trade, whether the Board of Trade will, on behalf of the public, enforce the statutory obligation by compelling the railway company to execute the works of restoration and maintenance which that company's neglect has rendered necessary.

Mr. KEARLEY: In view of the special position of the Board of Control under the Acts relating to the canal, it is for that board to consider what are their legal powers to cause the matters complained of to be set right, and whether there is *prima facie* ground for proceedings to be taken. I understand that the necessary inquiries have been ordered in both these directions.

Mr. GINNELL: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that it is of the Board of Control of the company of which we complain?

[No Answer was returned.]

Inspection of Mines by Workmen's Inspectors.

Mr. J. JOHNSON (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether under General Rule 39 of The Mines Regulation Act it is competent for the local (or workmen's) inspectors to select the portions of seams or pits which they would desire to inspect; whether at a colliery where there are three pits, and a partial inspection of No. 1 pit was made on Monday, would it be competent for the workmen's inspectors at their own option to demand to inspect No. 3 on Tuesday, before No. 1 is finished; and can he say who is the determining authority in such a case.

The SECRETARY of STATE for HOME AFFAIRS (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I am advised that under Section 49, General Rule 38 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, the persons appointed by the men to inspect a mine are entitled to go to any part of the mine, and there appears to be nothing in the rule to compel them to finish the examination of one pit before entering another. The owner, however, is entitled under the rule to send officials with the persons making the inspection; and reasonable notice of the latter's wish to examine a mine or part of a mine should be given to the management, so that arrangements can be made for other officials to perform the duties of those who for the time being are occupied in going round with the men's representatives.

Anthrax at Shipley.

Mr. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the

Home Department whether he is aware that a woman named Mary Lyons died on Sunday last from anthrax, after having been employed for some time by Messrs. Campbell & Harrison, of Shipley, near Bradford; whether he is aware that at this firm's works sixteen cases of anthrax, resulting in eight deaths, have occurred during the last two years; and whether he proposes to take immediate action in the matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: Inquiries have been made into this case. It appears that the deceased woman was employed on several kinds of wools, including Persian, but at a late stage of their treatment, in comb-minding, after the wool had been opened and sorted, washed in three wash bowls, and passed through other processes. Unfortunately, medical advice was not called in until a few hours before her death, and as she was only absent from her work for one day, and that day a Saturday, no suspicion was aroused at the works, or she would have been visited, I understand, at once by the firm's doctor. Since my previous Answer to the hon. Member with regard to this firm, the conditions have, I am informed, been further improved; and the present case cannot be traced to any neglect of the precautions required by the regulations, which are being fully observed. The state of things is undoubtedly serious, and I am communicating with the newly established Anthrax Committee with a view to special and early attention being given to the dangers arising from Persian wool.

Trial of Children, Special Courts for.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can take any steps, administrative or other, to promote the institution of special courts for the trial of children, and to secure provision that children before trial should be detained elsewhere than in police cells.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, sir. I have already taken action in both the matters mentioned. I am in communication with magistrates as to the making of arrangements for the separation of cases in which children are concerned from the ordinary criminal business of the courts and with the police authorities as to the detention of children before trial. The replies I have received are on the whole satisfactory, and show that both magistrates and police are generally anxious to co-operate with the Home Office in preventing in every practicable way the association of children with adult offenders. In a few weeks, when the replies to my inquiries are complete, I shall be able to decide whether any further action is necessary.

Inspection of Mines.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has instructed Mines Inspector Ronaldson to prosecute Messrs. A. G. Moore & Company, owners of the Carronrigg Colliery in Stirlingshire, on the said inspector's information that Messrs. A. G. Moore & Company, having abandoned the Carronrigg mine on December 2nd last, had failed to send in a plan of the workings within the period of three months required by Clause 38 of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887; whether he is aware that Inspector Ronaldson's information was incorrect, inasmuch as, although actual working of coal in the mine was stopped, and the stoppage duly reported, on December 2nd, the mine was not abandoned till February 27th, when the pumps and rails were removed and the company's manager left the ground, and the abandonment was duly reported on March 30th; whether, under these circumstances, he will at once direct Inspector Ronaldson to withdraw from the prosecution of Messrs. A. G. Moore & Company, who have been summoned to appear before the sheriff in Stirling on Wednesday next, April 11th; and whether he will warn Inspector Ronaldson to avoid such proceedings in future.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, sir, I instructed the inspector to take proceedings against this firm for failure to send in the plan required by the Act. In so doing, I acted on the formal notice previously given by the firm that the mine had been abandoned on December 2nd, and on the inspector's report that the plan had not been sent in within the prescribed period. Since the prosecution was directed the plan has been sent in by the firm, and a statement has been made to me by them that though working for coal was discontinued on December 2nd, men were employed for some time afterwards in the mine in removing rails and other materials, and it was not in fact actually abandoned till the end of February. I have no reason for questioning the accuracy of this statement, and in the circumstances, and as the plan has been received, I have decided to stay the proceedings. No blame whatever in the matter attaches to the inspector, who gave the firm, on receiving from them the notice of abandonment, the usual reminder to send in the plan within the prescribed period, and who has acted properly throughout.

Law Courts in London, Dublin and Edinburgh.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the cost of the erection of the Law Courts in London; whether any new Law Courts have been erected in Dublin or Edinburgh during the last fifty years; and, if so, at what date and what cost; and whether any alterations or additions to existing Law Courts have been made in the same cities during the same period; and if so, at what cost, and from what sources did the money come.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): The total cost of the erection of the Law Courts in London was in round figures £2,000,000, of which a considerable proportion was defrayed from the suitors' funds. During the last fifty years three additional courts have been built in Dublin, namely:—(1) The Landed Estates Court and Offices, 1858 to 1861, at a cost of £19,879; (2) Probate Court, 1863, £5,359; (3) Bankruptcy Court, 1865–1867, £10,931. During this period no Law Courts have been erected in Edinburgh. The information asked for in the last part of the Question would be very laborious to compile, as it would involve an examination of the accounts under several headings for a period of fifty years; and I trust that my hon. friend will agree with me that the trouble involved in the preparation of the return would scarcely be justified by the result.

MR. C. E. PRICE: But the return is not complete; in 1894 the Bank of Ireland advanced £15,000 for public works.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member must not give information.

MR. C. E. PRICE: Well, I should like to ask whether, in view of the enormous amount of money spent in Dublin and London the Law Courts of Edinburgh should not be put into a proper condition?

MR. McKENNA: I am not aware that they are not in a proper condition. The hon. Gentleman must address that Question to the First Commissioner of Works. With regard to the funds as to which I was asked: those funds were to build the Law Library and not the Law Courts

MR. A. DEWAR (Edinburgh, S.): Is not my hon. friend aware that a recent Report has been issued, showing that accommodation in the Edinburgh courts is urgently necessary, and will he take steps to find such accommodation?

MR. McKENNA: As I have already said to the hon. Member for the Central Division of Edinburgh, that is a Question which should be addressed to my right hon. friend the First Commissioner of Works.

Salaries for Judicial Courts in England and Wales and Scotland and Ireland.

MR. C. E. PRICE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury the cost per head of population for the salaries of the judicial courts in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, exclusive of the House of Lords; and the average salary earned by the county court judges of England and Wales and the sheriffs in Scotland respectively in the year 1905.

MR. McKENNA: By "salaries of the judicial courts," I understand my hon. friend to refer to the salaries of the judges of the superior courts which are charged on the Consolidated Fund. On this assumption the answer to the first part of the question is:—England and Wales cost per head 1·1 penny, Scotland 2·5 pennies, Ireland 3·3 pennies. The average salary earned by county court judges in England and Wales in 1905 was £1,500 per annumn. The average salary earned by sheriffs in Scotland in that year was £914.

MR. C. E. PRICE: Does that include the charges for stipendiary magistrates in England?

MR. McKENNA: No. My hon. friend asked me only in respect to county court judges. The salary of a county court judge is £1,500 a year, and therefore the average salary of the county court judges in England must be £1,500 a year.

Unemployed in Manchester.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the distress suffered by the unemployed in Manchester and of the fact that the last Report of the Distress Committee showed that 5,600 are still on the Manchester unemployed register; and whether, seeing that he has refused to receive a deputation from the committee, he will state whether he proposes to give better facilities to the committees for meeting the demands for work and announce when he intends to introduce proposals for meeting the difficulties and distress due to unemployment.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The number of persons remaining on the Manchester unemployed register yesterday was, I understand, 1,864. I cannot at present fix a date for the introduction of the Bill to amend the Unemployed Workmen Act, and I fear I must repeat what I have already stated, namely, that I cannot give any intimation as to the nature of the proposals which the Bill will contain.

The Land Purchase Act and Registered Land.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been directed to Section 54, Subsection (4), of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903, and the provision therein which makes void a charge on registered land created by will unless such charge is registered within six months from the death of the testator; whether, having regard to the fact that such registration is in many cases impossible owing to the will not being proved within six months, and to the fact that the person to whom a charge on registered land is left may be unaware of the bequest, or may be kept in ignorance of it by the devisee of the land untill the time allowed for registration has expired, he will introduce an amendment of the section to make the six months run from the date of probate and throw upon the personal representative the duty of registering all charges on registered land created by the will.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool Exchange): My attention has been called to the section to which the hon. Member refers, and I agree with him that an amendment of the law is required in the direction pointed out by him. The matter is not, however, in the opinion of the Government, sufficiently urgent to justify the introduction of a Bill specially dealing with the subject, but in the event of a Bill being at any time introduced to amend the Land Purchase Acts generally, I shall most favourably consider his recommendation.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have any prospect of being able to reinstate Edward Fagan, evicted tenant, Westmeath, in his former holding, or of getting a new holding for him.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received an application from Edward Fagan, who claims reinstatement as the son of a deceased evicted tenant. The Commissioners wrote to Fagan on 16th March, asking him to indicate the estate upon which he claims reinstatement, but he has not yet replied.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will direct the Estates Commissioners to have James Lynch, of Monmore, near Kilrush, in the county of Clare, an evicted tenant on the estate of Mr. Marcus Keane, in the county of Clare, who is selling his property, reinstated, the necessary forms having been lodged with the Estates Commissioners in November, 1906; and whether, seeing that Lynch was decreed at the last quarter sessions in Kilrush for trespass on the farm from which he has been evicted, and has since appealed to the summer assizes, he will direct that proceedings may be stayed until the Estates Commissioners have reinstated him.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received no application for the reinstatement of James Lynch on the estate of Mr. Marcus Keane, no proceedings for the sale of which are pending before them. The Commissioners will doubtless consider any application which they may receive, but I have no jurisdiction to give the directions suggested.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the fact that the sale of this estate is pending, and Mr. Marcus Keane has expressed himself as being willing to reinstate this evicted tenant, the right hon. Gentleman will see whether something cannot be done to withdraw the prosecution against this man for trespass on the farm from which he had been evicted but upon which the landlord has agreed to put him back?

MR. BRYCE: I could hardly say whether it is possible to do that, because to interfere with legal proceedings is not in my power. I should say the first thing to be done is for Mr. Lynch to make an application. He does not seem to have done that yet.

Shooting at an Evicted Tenant.

MR. HALPIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Michael Sheedy, who is a caretaker on the farm from which James Lynch, of Monmore, near Kilrush, in the county of Clare, has been evicted, fired two shots from a revolver at Lynch and threatened to take his life if he found him again on the farm from which he had been evicted; will he say if Sheedy has a licence to carry arms, and, if so, who gave him the licence; and will the matter be reported to the Lord Chancellor for Ireland so that the licence may be withdrawn from Sheedy.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that James Lynch has made a complaint to the effect that on March 20th when he was on the farm from which he had been evicted Michael Sheedy, the caretaker, fired two shots from a revolver, not at him, but as if to intimidate him. Sheedy possesses a licence under the Peace Preservation Act, which was granted to him by the resident magistrate of the district. The question of revoking that licence, which will be for the Lord Lieutenant to determine, will not be considered until the prosecution which is being instituted by Lynch has concluded.

Gun Licences in Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Patrick W. Sullivan, of Greenane, Templenoe, county Kerry, applied for a gun licence on 1st January; and can he state why the licence has been refused by Captain Crane, R.M.

MR BRYCE: I am inquiring into this matter.

Purchase of Holdings, the Abolition of Inspection.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the pressure within the law under which many tenants are now signing agreements to purchase their holdings, and the facility afforded for the exercise of this pressure by the abolition of inspection in cases within the zones, whether a record will be kept of all sales sanctioned without inspection, with a view to applications based upon that ground for relief from the payment of annuities so contracted.

MR. BRYCE: Without discussing the foundation upon which the hon. Member bases this Question, I may say that I am informed that the records kept by the Estates Commissioners in every case of purchase show whether the case falls within or without the zones set up by the Act of 1903, *i.e.*, whether or no inspection has been made.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when a landlord proposes to sell his estate within the zones, and is *primâ facie* entitled under the Land Act of 1903 to have the sale sanctioned without inspection, how, by whom, and with what class of facts are the Estates Commissioners moved to exercise their discretion on the question of price; is it open to the tenants who, under pressure, have signed purchase agreements in such a case to afterwards invoke the protection of the Commissioners in this respect; and will the Commissioners entertain such an application.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the reply to the first part of the Question is that they can exercise no discretion as regards price. The second part of the Question raises a point on the interpretation of the Estates Commissioners' powers under the Act of 1903 and former Acts, which is one of much complexity, and upon which I can hardly venture to offer an opinion, even if an opinion on so intricate a subject could be brought within the limits of an Answer. On the question of the meaning of equitable, I may refer to the judgment of Mr. Justice Meredith in the case of the King-Harman estate. As to what constitutes duress, the hon. and learned Member knows this to be a matter in which the principle is clear but the application often difficult.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many estates have been sold under the Land Act of 1903 without inspection for value or for security.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that full information as to the number of holdings sold which came within the zones, and which, therefore, were not inspected for security will appear in the Commissioners' Report to the 31st March, 1906, now in course of preparation.

Instructions to Land Valuers.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the character of the duties of land valuers, inspectors, lay sub-commissioners, and assessors, engaged in the fixing of judicial rents, and the necessity for a code of instructions recognised by the most competent men so engaged, and recognised for analogous purposes by the Estates Commissioners, he will require the preparation and use of a code of instructions embodying the principles upon which those officials are to act and the elements they are to take into account in preparing their report, so that the suitors may know upon what principles their interests and property are being dealt with; and will he afford Parliament an opportunity of considering such instructions in draft before their final adoption.

MR. BRYCE: This Question is based on a misapprehesion as to the constitution and jurisdiction of the Land Commission acting under the Land Law Acts in relation to the fixing of judicial rents. The executive Government have no right or legal power to interfere with the Land Commission in the exercise of their judicial functions. Any such instructions which may be in force were referred to in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of yesterday.†

Removal of Police Witnesses from Belfast.

*MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any of the witnesses examined on behalf of ex-Head Constable Farrell at the recent constabulary investigation in Belfast have been transferred from Belfast, and, if so, on what grounds; whether inquiry will be made into the conduct of District Inspector Redmond in connection with that investigation; whether this district inspector recommended, or has been consulted with regard to any transfer; and whether, having regard to the fact that the case for the defence was supported by twenty-six police witnesses and twelve civilian witnesses, and that the removal of any of the police witnesses conveys an implication of perjury on these thirty-eight witnesses, he will direct a reconsideration of the proposed removal of any of the witnesses.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector-General that he has ordered the transfer from Belfast of two of the constabulary witnesses who were examined at the investigation referred to. Such transfer has been ordered, not on account of the evidence given at the inquiry, but because, in the Inspector-General's opinion, the officers in question had failed in the zealous performance of their duties. The Inspector-General does not consider any inquiry into the conduct of District Inspector Redmond to be necessary. The district inspector did not recommend any transfer, nor was he consulted in the matter. The fact that the transfers mentioned have been ordered does not convey any implication whatever that the witnesses who gave evidence were guilty of perjury, and the Inspector-General sees no ground for re-considering his decision in the matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 1004.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain exactly why these witnesses were removed. He says they were removed not because they gave evidence for the defence but because of general police charges.

Mr. BRYCE: I do not say that these matters were "charges." They were thought by the Inspector-General not to have discharged their duties in a satisfactory way.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think it is highly desirable when two witnesses for the defence are removed from the town that this House should be told clearly why they were removed?

Mr. BRYCE: I have given the hon. Member all the information in my possession. Nobody is involved in a charge of perjury; there was no question of perjury. There were a great many differences of opinion and a great many different statements made but they did not involve perjury.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I shall put down another Question on the subject after Easter.

Shooting at Nationalists.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state by what means the solicitor for the prisoners in the prosecutions at the Tyrone assizes, for shooting at Nationalists, obtained access to the petty sessions records of the Crown witnesses; and whether he will ascertain if the petty sessions clerk, who is employed in this solicitor's office, assisted his employer in obtaining such access.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that the clerk of petty sessions supplied the defendants' solicitor with copies of the depositions in the case referred to, as he was bound by statute to do, but that he gave no access to any other records of the court either to the solicitor in question or to any other person. The clerk states that he was employed in the solicitor's office prior to his appointment as petty sessions clerk, but that he is not now so employed.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland with reference to the recent prosecutions at the Tyrone assizes for shooting at Nationalists, whether he can state the names of the counsel who prosecuted on behalf of the Crown; whether he can say if the jury was exclusively Unionist; and what was the result of the prosecution.

*Mr. CHERRY: The names of the counsel who prosecuted for the Crown in the prosecution referred to in the Questions are Messrs. Alexander Lane and A. L. Horner, K.C. They are the ordinary Crown Prosecutors for the county. I have no knowledge as to the political views of any of the jury, and the Crown Solicitor informs me that he did not enquire into their views or direct any juror to stand by. The prosecution resulted in an acquittal.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Are we to understand that what was done when these Unionists were prosecuted was that the two counsel who were engaged in the case were the Unionist candidates for North and South Tyrone, that the prisoners were tried before a Unionist judge and jury, and is the hon. Member surprised that under those circumstances the prisoners were acquitted?

*Mr. CHERRY: Mr. Horner was a candidate for one of the Divisions of Tyrone, but I do not know that Mr. Lane was a candidate for any constituency. I found that these two gentlemen had been for some years the usual Crown prosecutors. It is not usual to remove prosecutors because they are candidates for Parliament. No attempt was made by the Crown to interfere with the ordinary balloting for the jury. No juror was asked to stand by.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I did not suggest that Mr. Lane was a candidate. What I suggested was that the prosecution was conducted by the Unionist candidate for South Tyrone, and the defence by the Unionist candidate for North Tyrone.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): The hon. Member has stated that no juror was asked to stand by. May I ask whether that practice will be observed in other parts of Ireland ?

*MR. CHERRY: I think the hon. Member is aware of the rules in force as to standing by. It is left in the hands of the Crown Solicitor and he gets instructions from the counsel, and I think the Crown Solicitor always acts in accordance with instructions.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S): Is it usual for Crown prosecutors to prosecute in counties where they are the candidates for seats in Parliament.

*MR. CHERRY: I really do not know. I must ask the hon. Member to put down a Question.

The Tyrone and West Belfast Elections. Damaging Property.

*MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that thirteen Orangemen, accused of firing revolvers and injuring property at Donemana, county Tyrone, after the Tyrone elections, have been discharged, although the magistrates were of opinion that the case was proved; whether he is aware that two respectable young men accused of injuring a hoarding for the purposes of a bonfire, after the West Belfast elections, were returned for trial to the assizes, when they were sent to prison for three months; and whether, having regard to the inequality of treatment, and to the nature of the offence in the latter case, he will order the release of the two young men sentenced at the Belfast assizes.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that in the Donemana case the defendants were discharged upon giving sureties to keep the peace for twelve months. I understand that the facts in the Belfast case are substantially as stated. It is not within my province to take the course suggested. The prerogative of mercy in such cases is vested in the Lord-Lieutenant, to whom any petition for mitigation of punishment should be addressed.

*MR. MACVEAGH: In view of the fact that the offence committed in the county Tyrone was much the graver of the two, cannot the right hon. Gentleman make a representation to the Lord-Lieutenant upon this subject.

MR. BRYCE: It is quite open for anybody to make a representation to the Lord-Lieutenant upon this subject, and I am quite sure that any representation made to him will be most carefully considered by him.

Returns of Agrarian Outrages.

*MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the fact that no periodical Returns are issued with regard to agrarian outrages in England, he will give directions to have the Irish Returns forthwith discontinued.

MR. BRYCE: This Question is receiving my consideration.

Appeals under the Land Commission.

MR. T. SMYTH (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that as a Sub-Land Commission was held in March, 1902, in Mohill, county Leitrim, when some of the cases were appealed against by the landlords, and that the Head Commission is to hold a court in Carrick on Shannon in this month, at which the appeals will be heard, he will explain why such a length of time—over four years—was allowed to elapse.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that the last sitting at which appeals from the Mohill district were heard took place in January, 1905, when the list for hearing included all cases in which appeals were lodged prior to June, 1902. The list for hearing during the present month will include all cases in which appeals were lodged prior to February, 1905. The Commissioners inform me that it is not possible to hold more frequent sittings for this district and at the same time have due regard to the claims of other districts.

The Royal Irish Constabulary and Illegal Coining.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what grounds a man named Crawford, sentenced to a year's imprisonment for illegal coining at Belfast, was released at the end of a few weeks; under what circumstances Constable Graham, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, was ordered to remove to county Tyrone; for what reason Constable Fraser was removed from detective duty to ordinary police duty; on what grounds Constable Irwin was censured; and whether any admonition was addressed to District Inspector Clayton in connection with the circumstances of the prosecution of M'Devitt and Crawford.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that Crawford was released by order of the Lords Justices. It is not usual to state the reasons for the exercise of the prerogative of mercy in such cases, but in this case I think it right to say that additional facts came to light which cast doubts upon the guilt of Crawford, and the learned Judge who tried the case advised that the prisoner should be released. The remaining facts of the Question deal with the internal decipline of the Royal Irish Constabulary, as to which it would be contrary to practice to give information. I may, however, state that it is not the fact that Constable Irwin was censured.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is a fact that the whole charge upon which this man was convicted was organised by the police of Belfast, and whether the police at Belfast supplied the whole of the material used in the illegal coining.

Mr. BRYCE: I know nothing of the facts, but I cannot believe it to be as the hon. Member stated.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Why then does the right hon. Gentleman decline to answer the Question as to why these police were removed from Belfast, and why Crawford was discharged from prison.

Mr. BRYCE: I have given all the information in my power. It would not be proper for me to relate all that passed, but I have given the hon. Member all the information I have.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: Is it a fact that this man was convicted and sent to prison, and afterwards released by the Lords Justices? Is it a fact that he was released because he alleged that he was led into a trap by the police, and because the Lords Justices satisfied themselves that that charge was true?

Mr. BRYCE: I do not know anything of the facts. I have given the hon. Member all the information that I have.

Increased Rents in County Down.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of the Earl of Annesley, landlord, John M'Crickard, tenant, in which Sub-Commissioner M'Connell added 50 per cent. to the acreable rent for proximity to the town of Newcastle; and whether he can state if there is any other land case recorded in which the rent has been increased to a similiar extent for a similar reason.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the land case of the Earl of Annesley, landlord, and John Rooney, tenant, in which the acreable rent was increased by 20 per cent. on account of proximity to Newcastle, county Down, whether he is aware that Sub-Commissioner M'Connell admitted in his report that the holding was fit only for sheep-grazing; whether there are any instructions to sub-commissioners to the effect that holdings fit only for sheep-grazing are more valuable when in proximity to a town; and, if not, on what grounds the increase of rent is sought to be justified.

Mr. BRYCE: These Questions appear to refer to judicial decisions of a Sub-Commission Court. The Land Commission inform me that they do not think it right to enter upon a discussion of such judicial decisions, for reasons set forth in my reply to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for East Galway yesterday. † A remedy in such cases is afforded by the statutory right of appeal. I am informed that no such instructions as are referred to in the latter Question have been issued by the Land Commission.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxv., 1011.

Repayments under the Land Purchase Act, 1903.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if the Treasury, in calculating the terms of repayment on advances made under the Act of 1903 for the purchase of land, took into account the fact that an unchangeable annuity of £3 5s. for sixty-eight and a half years is the exact equivalent of the £4 annuity with decadal reductions for a period of seventy-two and a half years, the terms of repayment for loans advanced under the Act of 1896; whether he is aware that the price paid by tenants under the Act of 1903, without the safeguard to the Treasury of inspection for value, far exceeds the price sanctioned by the Land Commission under former Acts, these prices being reported on and approved of by the Land Commission inspector who visited the holdings to ascertain whether the State had security in the land for repayment of the loan; and, in view of the fact that the Estates Commissioners have been obliged to issue more than 1,000 processes for recovery of annuity or interest on loan due to the Land Commission under the Act of 1903, he will take such steps as may be necessary to safeguard the Treasury from loss and to prevent the necessity of evictions.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that the Treasury had regard to the amount of the annuity, 3¼ per cent., and did not take the comparison referred to into account. As to the remainder of the Question, I beg to refer to my replies to the Questions of the hon. Member for West Waterford on the 5th March,† and of the hon. Member for North Westmeath on the 27th March,‡ which fully dealt with the matter, and to which I can add nothing.

Land Inspection under the Ashbourne Acts and the Act of 1903.

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that it was the practice in all transactions for the sale and purchase of land, under the Ashbourne Acts and Mr. Gerald Balfour's Act, for the Land Commission to send an inspector to make an examination of each holding and report whether, taking into consideration both the interest of the landlord and of the tenant, the holding was security for the advance before the price agreed on was sanctioned, he can say in how many cases in the counties of Cork and Limerick did the Land Commission inspector report that the land was not security to the State for the agreed price, and what was the number of years' purchase settled between the landlord and tenant to be paid in these rejected bargains.

MR. BRYCE; I am informed by the Land Commission that, under the Rules of the 16th March, 1897, all agreements for purchase and applications for advances under the Acts of 1885 and 1891 were referred to an inspector to report as to the security for the advance and other matters. It was, however, provided by the supplementary rules of the 17th May, 1901, that the inspection might be dispensed with if the Commissioners were otherwise satisfied as to the security for the advance. The Commissioners inform me that it would occupy considerable time and necessitate the withdrawal from their proper work of clerks at present fully occupied, to analyse all the applications for advances from the counties of Cork and Limerick which have been refused, dismissed, or withdrawn for defects in title, irregularity, insufficiency of security, and other causes since 1885, in order to ascertain the number of those which were refused for insufficiency of security. In the circumstances I do not think that the Commissioners should be asked to undertake the preparation of the statistics asked for, as it is undesirable to delay the progress of their very important work.

Land Sales.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that agreements for the sale of the estates of the Marquis of Ely in county Fermanagh were perfected so long ago as November or December, 1903; whether the proceedings for sale to the tenants are still pending; if so, what is the cause of the delay in completion; and whether he will direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to this property with a view to purchase by them, if direct sale to the tenants be not possible.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 104–5.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1077–79., 1045.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that this estate is for sale in the Land Judge's Court. The Registrar of that Court informs me that no agreements for the sale of the estate were perfected in 1903 or at any time, but that negotiations for sale are in progress. The estate has not come in any way before the Estates Commissioners.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kerry I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state, in connection with the sale of land by landlords, either to tenants, the Estates Commissioners, or the Congested Districts Board, in the county of Kerry, under the Act of 1903, the name of landlord, area of property, valuation, yearly rental, purchase money, bonus on purchase money, date when agreements to purchase were lodged, and date when sale was sanctioned or approved of.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that their Annual Report and Monthly Returns, now in course of preparation, will give ample information by counties as to all holdings sold under the Act of 1903. I am forwarding to the hon. Member a Return giving particulars of the purchases made by the Congested Districts Board in County Kerry.

The Diminution of Salmon and Trout in Irish Rivers.

Mr. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Government has taken any steps by way of carrying into effect the recommendations of the Viceregal Commission which recently inquired into the diminution of salmon and trout in the rivers of Ireland; whether the establishment of an Irish Fishery Department responsible to Parliament and independent of the Department of Agriculture is contemplated, as recommended by the Commission; whether anything has been done or will shortly be done for the establishment of hatcheries upon the River Erne; and, if he will recommend a subsidy from the Irish Development Grant towards the efforts of the Lough Erne Steamboat Company to develop tourist traffic in the Enniskillen district, by their establishment of a daily steamer service from Enniskillen to Castle Caldwell and Belleek, upon one of the most beautiful of the lakes of Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction have taken steps to carry out the recommendations of the Commission referred to so far as the existing law and their available funds permit. The recommendations which have been acted on are:—The establishment and maintenance of fish hatcheries; the provision of grants in aid of Boards of Conservators and other bodies charged with the protection of fisheries; engineering and financial assistance in the construction of fish passes, and the making of scientific investigations into the life history and migrations of the salmonidæ. The hon. Member is mistaken in thinking that the Commission recommended the establishment of a Fishery Board independent of the Department of Agriculture. They recommended the creation of a Fishery Board under the Department of Agriculture similar to the Boards which at present exist for Agriculture and Technical Instruction. This recommendation has not been carried out, but I should suppose that it will be considered by the committee of inquiry into the working of the Department which has just been appointed. There is a hatchery on the Erne subsidised by the Department and capable of an annual output of about one million of fry. No application for a subsidy to the Lough Erne Steamboat Company has been received, and it would not be possible to give a decision in the matter until the scheme has been fully explained and considered. I may, however, say that having regard to the many claims upon the Development Grant, it is improbable that assistance to any private steamboat company would be afforded from that fund, much as I desire to see further development of tourist traffic on a lake of singular beauty.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Would the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of refusing all applications with regard to what is left of the Irish development fund, except for the purpose for which it was granted, namely, education.

Mr. BRYCE: It is very dangerous to give a general promise, but I am quite alive to the possibility to which the hon. and learned Member refers.

The National Library of Ireland — Hours of Attendants.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the attendants in the National Library of Ireland are obliged to work fifty-four hours a week, while those employed in the Patent Office Library of London are required to work only forty-two hours; and, as both are Government institutions, open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., will he allow a reduction in the Dublin institution to forty-two hours weekly, as it is now possible to do so without increase of staff or extra cost.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that the hours of attendance, fifty-four per week, for the men attendants in the National Library of Ireland were fixed in January, 1904, on the recommendation of a Departmental Committee of Inquiry, and that these hours could not be reduced to forty-two per week without an augmentation of the staff. I have no information as to the hours of attendance at the Patent Office Library, but I understand that at the reading room of the British Museum, attendants appointed since 1887 have approximately the same hours as those of the National Library of Ireland.

Lunatic Asylums in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will consider the desirability of introducing the necessary legislation to relieve local taxation by making the up-keep of lunatic asylums in Ireland any Imperial charge.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answers which I gave to similar Questions on the 26th and 29th March,† and to which I have nothing to add.

Proposed International Exhibition of 1908.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, considering the fact that no Great International Exhibition has been held in London since 1862, and that the present generation has had no opportunity of seeing such an exhibition, and that the only two exhibitions held in London have both been financially successful, he would be prepared to advise the Government to support a proposal to hold such an exhibition in the year 1908, provided a strong and representative committee is formed to go into the question.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I am not prepared to give the hon. Member a final Answer to his Question to-day. There are a good many preliminary matters that would have to be carefully considered, amongst others the question of cost, as to which my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer may have an opinion of his own. Again, I am not at all sure that arrangements could be made by 1908. I doubt it. Nor am I at all certain that the notice of an exhibition would be welcomed by the commercial community with any particular enthusiasm. But I shall be glad to consider any evidence the hon. Member can furnish me as to the general desire for such an exhibition.

Erosion of the Coast.

Mr. G. V. BARING (Winchester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the desirability of nominating a member of the National Sea Defence Conference to serve on the Royal Commission about to be appointed to inquire into the question of coast erosion.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Due consideration will be given to any suitable names that may be submitted to me.

Lord De Ramsey and his Allotment Holders.

Mr. BOULTON (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the attention of the Government has been directed to the fact that Lord De Ramsey has given notice to quit to 1,100 allotment holders in the Ramsey division; and, in view of the hardship inflicted on these people, if any steps can be taken to enable the parish council to provide other holdings for them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 846, 1550.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My hon. friend will find I think that that the question which he raises comes direct in the province of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, and I do not think I can do better than repeat the substance of an Answer of his which is circulated to-day, namely, that the best course for the present holders of the allotments will be to place themselves at once in communication with the local authorities. If any further action is found to be necessary, my right hon. friend has undertaken that any application made to him shall receive his immediate consideration.

Pay of Volunteer Officers.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the claims of certain Volunteer officers for pay during their attendance at a staff ride, held at Swanage by direction of the G. O. C. Southern Command from March 14th to 17th, have been refused by the G. O. C. in charge of administration at Salisbury; and, if so, on what grounds this refusal was based; and whether, having regard to the acknowledged need for the further training of the officers of the Volunteer force, he will see that pay is not refused to Volunteer officers when it is granted to officers of the Yeomanry attending similar staff rides.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): The report of the General Officer Commanding on the matters mentioned has not yet reached the War Office. I am not therefore able at present to deal with the question. I may add that the conditions under which Volunteer officers serve do not provide for their receiving pay except in the case of certain specified courses of instruction in which staff rides are not included.

The Permanent Establishment of the Cavalry School.

Mr. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, considering the inconvenience and expense of the present system, whereby the cavalry school is divided between Bulford and Netheravon, he will consider the advisability of selecting a permanent locality for the cavalry school.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, taking into consideration the advantages of Netheravon for a cavalry school, he will consider the advisability of permanently establishing the cavalry school there; and if he will recommend the equipment of that place so as to make it thoroughly efficient and bring it into line with the cavalry schools already established on the Continent.

*Mr. HALDANE: In reply to these two Questions I have to say the permanent location of the cavalry school is now receiving careful consideration and will, it is hoped, shortly be decided. Any advantages possessed by Netheravon will not be lost sight of.

The New Miniature Rifle.

Mr. BRANCH (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if a pattern has been approved for a miniature rifle; if it has been decided to manufacture the same; if so, for what number, to whom have the orders been given, and at what price?

*Mr. HALDANE: A pattern has been approved and is being registered. The manufacture of the rifle will be left to the trade firms approved by the War Department, which will grant licences to such firms and mark with a special Government mark all rifles made by them. No orders will be given by the War Office.

The Public and the Houses of Parliament.

Mr. BRIGHT (Oldham): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether arrangements can be made to admit the public, when visiting the Houses of Parliament on Saturdays, into the Lower Waiting Hall, where the bust of Cromwell and the statue of Mr. Bright are situated.

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Lewis Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale): Yes, Sir, I think this is a reasonable request and I have arranged with the Lord Great Chamberlain that in future visitors to the Houses of Parliament are to be admitted to the Lower Waiting Hall where they can see the statues referred to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Government what Supply the Government propose to take the first Thursday after the Easter recess.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Estimates that will be taken on the first Thursday after the recess are the Revenue Votes, and Classes 1 and 2 of the Civil Service, excluding the Home Office, the Scottish and Irish Votes, and other administrative departments.

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 122.]

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 164.]

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table and to be printed.

ELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Colonel Williams; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lane-Fox.

Report to lie upon the Table.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 165.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 166.]

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 167.]

NEW BILLS.

VIVISECTION (ABOLITION) BILL.

"To provide for the total Abolition of Vivisection, presented by Mr. John Johnson; supported by Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. John Wilson, Colonel Sandys, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Moss, Mr. Bell, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Lupton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL.

"To establish Limited Partnerships," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Blake, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Parkes, and Mr. Rose; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 169.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To consolidate the Enactments relating to Agricultural Holdings in Scotland," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 170.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (No. 2) BILL.

"To consolidate the Enactments relating to Agricultural Holdings in England," presented by Sir Edward Strachey; supported by Mr. Solicitor-General; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 171.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [4th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) said that on two occasions during the last Parliament he had the honour of introducing a Workmen's Compensation Bill prepared by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Unions Congress, the Miners' Federation, and the Textile Workers' Unions. That Bill, if passed, would have given to all working men and working women in all trades equal right to compensation in case of injury from accident. That Bill also provided that the compensation should be paid from the day the accident happened, and not from a fortnight later. He congratulated the Home Secretary upon the fact that while the Bill introduced on behalf of the Government did not go so far, it did take a decided step in advance by largely extending the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Act. There could, however, be no difference of opinion as to this, that the ultimate goal aimed at was that contained in the Bill which he had himself introduced, and to which he had just referred—namely, that every worker in the country must be equally entitled to compensation under some extended Bill. The Bill now before the House did not go so far in many particulars as many Members desired, but it deserved their support because it was a distinct advance upon any previous measure. He was glad to hear the Home Secretary state that in regard to some of the provisions of the Bill he would preserve an open mind, and that if it was possible to extend the scope of the measure so as to bring domestic servants, of whom there were fully a million in the United Kingdom, and shop assistants, of whom there were 450,000, and clerks and others, within its provisions he would favourably consider the inclusion of those classes in this Bill. He rejoiced that the right hon. Gentleman had included seamen That had been urgently needed for years, and on all sides of the House there would be a sense of satisfaction that in a Bill of this nature consideration had been had for those who carried the trade and commerce of this country to the uttermost parts of the earth, and that they were to receive justice in this matter. He had great doubt as to the wisdom of any scheme of insurance with the great insurance companies. One of the gravest objections to the law as it now stood was the amount of litigation that took place, and the great difficulty in obtaining a just and reasonable settlement quickly and at a reasonable cost. If the employers insured the whole of their risks with the great insurance companies litigation would be increased instead of diminished. He was therefore driven to hope that ultimately there would be a system of State insurance under which every worker in the country would receive with the utmost speed and at the smallest cost just compensation in case of accident, and his relatives in case of his death, in the course of his employment. The question also arose as to whether compensation ought not to be paid from the day the accident happened. The Home Secretary, as they gratefully recognised, had met them half-way in this matter, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give his serious attention and consideration to the French system, under which if an accident threw a man out of work for ten days he received compensation from the day the accident happened. In that way they would get appreciably nearer that condition which they all desired. There was, he submitted, no expenditure of money on the part of the commercial community of the nation that was more profitable than that expended on the question of workmen's compensation. In 1897 they were told that compensation would cause the coal-owners not less than 3d. per ton increased cost upon their coal production. In the county of Durham, under a mutual system of insurance amongst the coal-owners the average cost had been not 3d., but two-thirds of a penny per ton. This led him to refer to one method of arranging this matter so that it might be simplified, litigation lessened, and expenditure saved. That method was grouping particular trades together and instituting this mutual system of insurance. The Durham miners would bear him out when he said that the Coal-owners' Association had met them in a very fair and reasonable spirit. Such an arrangement was infinitely better than submitting the workmen to the tender mercies of the big insurance companies. Then there was the question of whether this principle of grouping particular trades together could not be extended, so as to include those employers who employed less than five workmen, without an extra burden being thrown on them by their inclusion. By this method of grouping he believed it would be possible to get over all. Vessels trading on the West Coast of Africa employed Chilian sailors but had European quartermasters and officers. If a quartermaster was married, the chances were that his wife resided in one of the ports at which his vessel called; but, if he were drowned, she would receive nothing, because she did not reside within the United Kingdom. There would thus be an inducement to a man to have his wife residing here whilst he was employed out there. There were a number of these curious things in the Bill, and he thought the proper thing, in view of the fact that shipowners had special obligations, would be that the whole matter should be put under a Merchant Shipping Bill and be considered carefully, especially having regard to the fact that a Royal Commission which had inquired into the matter had strongly recommended that the question should not be dealt with under the Employers' Liability Act but by an additional clause to the Merchant Shipping Act. That was the deliberate recommendation of the Royal Commission, and he thought it would be unusual for the House to take an entirely different course unless very strong reasons could be urged for so doing. He had the honour to represent a constituency where there were a large number of fishermen. The cases of fishermen varied in different parts of the country, but in his constituency they fished on shares. He had asked the Home Secretary how those fishermen would be affected, and, although no doubt the right hon. Gentleman did his best to make the matter clear, he was still in a haze or fog as to what the effect of the Bill would be. In one case a vessel would be owned by three men, and as the crew usually numbered seven that would leave four employed, if they were workmen under the Act. If that boat were lost, the widows of these four men would receive nothing. In another case a boat would be owned by one man, and, if they were workmen under the Act, there would then be six employed. If that boat were lost the widow of the unfortunate owner would have to pay £1,200 compensation to the wives of the other men. It appeared to him that the Bill was going to work very unfairly in different cases, and he hoped the whole question of fishermen, and especially of Scotch fishermen on the Moray Firth, would receive more consideration.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford) said that in the first place he must congratulate the Home Secretary upon his Bill, and upon having avoided the system of legislation by reference from which on other questions they had suffered for so long a time. He hoped that in that respect the right hon. Gentleman would maintain his principles, because a speech which the right hon. Gentleman made the other day led him to fear that he would not hold on to those principles in other cases. If, however, they were to do anything in that direction it would only be by mutual forbearance with regard to the criticism of old matter. He hoped that having that point of view in mind the House would not consider this Bill as one thrown upon the Table, but that it would be considered mainly in regard to those matters which were not within the purview of the original Act. So far as he was aware, the employers would be perfectly willing to leave on one side those other portions of the Bill. Although many of the recommendations of the Commission in favour of employers were disregarded by the Bill, still he did not think there would be any wish on the part of employers to insist upon them, because they valued the consolidation principle. He hoped that others would also leave those questions alone, and that the Home Secretary would do nothing which would prevent the carrying out of this principle in the future. Another point of congratulation was that the right hon. Gentleman had been allowed to carry on the principle of the Workmen's Compensation Act. There was nothing he regretted more than that in the course of the legislation of the last Parliament his Party did not seize the opportunity extended to them and do this work. They had the information before them in the Blue-book, which contained a very capable examination of the Act, and proved where it was fallible. It had been reserved, however, for this Government to bring in a Bill which undoubtedly extended the Act very largely. He could not help thinking, however, that they had taken the plums and left out the difficulties. The speech of the Home Secretary showed that the right hon. Gentleman had realised already that many of the chief features of the Bill would have to be the subject of very serious review, so that almost all the matters upon which they decided on the Second Reading would have to be put into the melting pot in Committee. As far as the Second Reading was concerned, let it be understood once for all that there was no difference of opinion in any section of the House in regard to it. What they desired was that having tried the experiment, and found, after careful investigation, that it had been a success, the matter should be carried out on the only logical plan, that there should be universal compensation to workmen for accidents which did not happen through their own wilful negligence. That principle was adopted by every section of the House. But dangers and difficulties had been clearly pointed out. Let them take the question of the small employer. The standard suggested by the Government would act very unequally and press very heavily upon the small employer. Nobody wanted to discourage the small employer, as it was only by a man becoming one that he could raise himself out of the ranks of labour, but there were many small employers who would become bankrupt if they had to compensate their workmen for an accident. With reference to another matter—the two weeks—he would also ask the House very seriously to consider the position in which they were placed. The period of a fortnight was arrived at after very mature consideration, and it received the strongest approval of the Royal Commission, who said that, on the whole, they felt compelled to come to the conclusion that the transference to the employers of any liability for the compensation of the whole or any part of the first two weeks would be a reversal of the policy adopted under the Act of 1897, and they saw no reason for recommending it. It was well known that even the reduction of the period to a week would double the cost of insurance, and they now had the Secretary of State for the Home Department recognising one thing, but having very much in his mind another. He certainly thought that in reference to a Bill of this importance the Government should have a definite thing in their mind, so that before the Bill reached Committee, employers could know to some extent what liability was to be thrown upon them, and see how far their industry was able to bear any additional charge. At the same time as they were bringing in the smaller employer, for whom the premiums were always high, they were making the insurance for him still more difficult. Therefore he hoped the Government would have an open mind in reference to this question, because it was to the interest not only of employers, but of workmen, that there should be certainty in this matter, and not constant changes. Then he would like to know how the alterations in connection with agriculture were to be sustained. The alteration in the wording was very considerable, and it seemed to him that it might lead to great difficulties, because whereas in Section A the agriculturist was to be brought under the Act, unless he could prove that he did not regularly employ in agriculture any permanent workman, immediately after came the clause in which it was stated that the workman was considered to be employed in agriculture if he were partly or occasionally employed in other work by the same employer. It seemed to him to be extremely difficult to combine these two so as to make sure as to the exact position of the small agriculturist. He was surprised that there was no reference at all in the definition clause to certain words to which the Commission gave a considerable amount of discussion. He did not know what the definition of a permanent workman was, and if he did not think the Government were free from the taint of slavery, he should say that the only kind of permanent workman he knew was a slave. It was a matter which ought to be more clearly defined. He would also like to ask for some explanation as to the expression "casual," in view of the strong opinion that was held by the Commission as to the extreme difficulty of defining casual employment. It was now brought to the forefront by being made the subject of a section which applied to agricultural employment. These were alterations of the Act of 1900, and they did not seem to simplify the wording of that Act; he hoped, therefore, before they got into Committee thoroughly to understand to what the Government intended the clause should apply. He hoped the Government would as far as possible listen to the arguments that had been addressed to them in regard to seamen, fishermen, and dangerous industries. So far as he knew they, as Members of Parliament, had no information to justify them in making the very large departure suggested by the Government. There was no desire, he believed, on the part of anybody that there should not be compensation for these special callings, but he thought it was the general opinion that the mode of giving that compensation should not follow the general lines which had been adopted in connection with employment in other trades. There were very strong grounds for suggesting that such peculiar difficulties as arose in the case of the fishermen should be reserved for separate treatment under a separate Bill.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N. E.) thought that they had heard too much about the small employer in this debate, and that some share of their pity should go out to those who suffered from injuries which this Bill proposed to meet. The debate had not supplied so far any reminder of the number of people injured and killed during their daily labour. He believed there were about 400 workpeople killed every month in this country, and about 7,000 injured in one way or another. The first point which he desired to refer to was the insufficiency of the compensation proposed by the Bill. The compensation proposed was half the average earnings of the man. He submitted that if a man fairly needed all his wages when he was well, the family needed even more than the whole of the man's wages when he was ill. Let them take as an illustration a man earning 30s. a week who was disabled for three weeks. The man would lose £4 10s., and under the Bill he would receive as compensation only 30s. He submitted that that was not generous treatment, and they were entitled to call upon the Government to take a step in advance of the attitude assumed by the Government some years ago when the compensation law was first passed. They felt that the trades and industries generally could afford a greater strain. The profits of trading and the increase of the wealth of the well-to-do appeared to him to prove conclusively that a heavier burden for such a good reason could well be borne by the trades and industries of this country. He did not accept the suggestion that the small employers should be excluded from liability. He understood the Home Secretary to advocate the exclusion of small employers because they were indifferent and would not face their responsibilities. It had been said that such men were very often ignorant and did not do what the law called upon them to do. He had yet to learn that indifference to and ignorance of the law were sufficient reasons for escaping one's responsibilities in regard to the common law of the land, and in this matter he thought the Government should not exclude such a large number of workers as would be excluded if these small employers of labour were enabled to escape their responsibilities. The small employers of labour in respect of their profits and trading conditions knew how to combine, and if they could not singly accept the liability which the principle of this Bill proposed, then they might act in association in order to insure the lives and limbs of their workmen. He submitted also that sufficient reasons had not been given by the Secretary of State for the Home Department for exclusion of domestic servants from the privileges of the Bill. Reference had been made by the right hon. Gentleman to the large number of domestic servants employed by working people. The Labour Party made no plea that the wage-earners of the country should escape their liabilities in respect of injuries sustained by those whom they employed. If necessary, they should call upon the ordinary working man to insure himself against the risk of accidents that might befall his domestic servant. He did not think they ought to exclude clerks from the operation of the Bill. They should not forget that there was a class of clerk who moved about large works and shipping yards amongst machinery in order to take down details, and he incurred almost as great a risk as the ordinary working man. It had been said upon both sides of the House that it was not advisable to depart from the present limit of a fortnight, because of the malingering there was or might be if working men were entitled to compensation from the first day of injury. He would point out that if a working man went home and said he had been hurt, that would not be taken as evidence of the injury, and his word would not be taken as the foundation for the payment of compensation. The doctor's evidence as to injury and incapacity would be required before any workman could set up his title to compensation. He thought the officers of the insurance company, the agents of the employer, and all the things attaching to a working man's conditions of work, would protect employers against the risk of having to pay when a man was not disabled at all. There were many points dealt with in this Bill which Labour Members warmly welcomed, but having accepted the payment of compensation as a principle, and that industries must bear the cost of accidents and deaths, he submitted that the House had had sufficient experience of industrial life to justify it in going further in regard to the amount of compensation, and in regard to the other items which he had mentioned.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said it was obvious that the methods of obstruction and the opportunities for obstruction, broadly speaking, were coterminous with the length of the measure. This Bill was much longer than it otherwise would have been, because the Home Secretary had accepted the advice given him, and had brought in a Bill which contained within its four corners the whole of the Act which Parliament was asked to adopt. He hoped that hon. Members opposite would see that his right hon. friend was not discouraged by their tactics. Having listened to the debate it appeared to him that the discussion had ceased to be a Second Reading debate, and he respectively submitted that a measure of this kind, which was accepted in principle in all quarters of the House, had been sufficiently debated by occupying two days, and as a great deal of work had to be done this session, he thought it would be better that matters of detail should be reserved for their proper place and that the House might now very well agree to the Second Reading. He wished to remind hon. Members who were new to the House that not only would they have an opportunity in Committee of bringing up these matters, but they would also have another opportunity on the Report stage. Upon these grounds he asked the House to bring the discussion to an end, and allow the Bill to go to the Committee upstairs.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) said there were many matters in connection with the general question dealt with in this Bill upon which, as a large employer of labour, he should like to say a few words. He happened to be one of the few large employers of labour in this House who had been elected in spite of the opposition of the Labour Party, and he thought the views of large employers in the matter under discussion were worthy of consideration. Upon this question he was in a position to speak in a more independent way than many hon. Members opposite. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] His independence was not in any way hostile to a sympathetic view of the question connected with the Workmen's Compensation Act; in fact what he would like to say was that no follower of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who brought this Act in during the year 1897, was at all averse to the Bill now under discussion. The Home Secretary the other day had appeared to think that there was one law for the rich and another for the poor upon this question of compensation; but it was rather characteristic of the present Cabinet that they should declare that the proposals to include clerks, shop assistants, and domestic servants had better be left to the House. That meant that the Government would not take the responsibility of stating what ought to be done with regard to those proposals. They were getting accustomed to that sort of thing from hon. Members opposite. He was somewhat surprised that upon the First Reading of the Education Bill they did not hear of some matters which would be left open to the House to alter as they pleased. The Home Secretary had laid down the principle that as there were 450,000 shop assistants and 1,000,000 domestic servants in cottages and small shops therefore they must be excluded from the Bill. That was tantamount to saying that rich men were to employ labour and pay compensation, but poor men were to pay no compensation. His point was that the terms of compensation should be the same. In this matter he had no pity for the bankers, the merchants, and the wealthy shop-keepers, and because there happened to be poor bankers, poor merchants, and poor shop-keepers, it was no reason why those classes should be excluded from the Bill, because they were just as well able to pay. He could not see that a principle which was good for one class should not be equally good and equally applicable to other classes of the community, and it ought to be applied to the fullest extent to both rich and poor. Personally he thought if the poor employers were included there would be great benefit to the community. There was nothing so injurious to the community in municipal management as the compound householder, because the compound householder had none of the responsibility of paying taxes. There was no doubt that our municipalities suffered immensely from that fact. He believed that if a small employer from start to finish had responsibility like the large employer in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Act there would be a better fellow feeling between employer and employed—a better treatment of domestic and other servants, and matters would go on with more sympathy between the classes of rich and poor than at present. As to the question of the "fourteen days," he was thoroughly in accord with the hon. Member who said that when an accident was fully proved compensation ought to start from the day of the accident. There was no question in his mind about that, but the question of proof was really a very serious thing. He was connected in works with two societies which were known to some hon. Members below the gangway. He thought hon. Members would admit that both societies were conducted with sympathy between employers and employed. The men themselves conducted the benefit societies and they were much better and greater critics than the employers in the conduct of the business of the societies. They threw aside many claims which the employers probably would have paid. It was of great advantage that the societies should be so conducted. Cases of malingering could be easily dealt with in that way. In the case of football if a man was injured in an alarming way on a Saturday it happened in some way or other that the man was back again playing the next Saturday. A young friend of his own, who was hunting, had two collar bones broken and another bone dislocated, and in six weeks he was out hunting again. Had he been eligible for compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, he would undoubtedly have gone to bed, awaiting payment of compensation. Therefore the question of malingering was a very serious one, and he did hope that the House would take it fully into consideration. The compensation should begin on the day the accident occurred, but they should consider whether the fortnight should remain for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the accident was a real one. The Home Secretary had dealt with the question of old age. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman's suggestions were at all workable. It was a sop which he did not think Cerberus would accept. The only way to deal with old age was by having a proper old age pension scheme as soon as they possibly could. The fact that certain classes of workmen claimed a minimum wage and other benefits meant that young men were required by employers, and undoubtedly the old men were in that way put out of work. Sub-section (6) of Clause 9 was in the following terms—

> "The Secretary of State may make Provisional Orders for extending the provisions of this section to other diseases and other processes, either without modification or subject to such modifications as may be contained in the Order."

That was really a very serious thing, for it was quite possible that the Home Secretary might say that measles, scarlet fever, or small pox were diseases to be dealt with by Provisional Order. If the law was going to be extended in that way, it ought to be done only after proper discussion. It was very tempting for the Secretary of State, when there was a clause of this sort, to comply with the solicitation of some generous politician to give relief for small pox if it was stated that a man had brought the disease into a place where workmen were employed. Undoubtedly the application of the clause ought to be limited so that employers should not be adversely affected when such cases occurred. Careful consideration must be given to the clauses relating to seamen, because they were very important indeed. They would press very heavily upon shipowners, and there really had been no time for the shipowning associations to send their views in order that they might be submitted to the House. He did not at all dispute the rights of seamen to receive compensation, but there were differences in connection with their conditions of service which showed that the proposals in the present Bill required very careful treatment from the House. He understood that the Home Secretary and the President of the Board of Trade had already conferred on this point. He wished to know whether, if seamen were to get the advantages proposed to be conferred by this Bill, it was intended to alter the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894. There were probably many Members of the House who did not know that the advantages which seamen at present possessed were very considerable. The Report of the Departmental Committee on Compensation for Injuries to Workmen, 1904, referring to the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, stated—

> "In the second place, there is the fact that at present certain sections of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, provide for the seaman in cases of illness, hurt, or injury on the voyage, and the provision made differs materially from that laid down in the Workmen's Compensation Act, so that should the latter Act be applied to seamen there would be a conflict between the two Acts. Moreover, in all cases of injury occurring on a foreign voyage, the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act are more advantageous to the seaman up to the point of his arrival in the United Kingdom. During the whole of the time that he is on board of the ship, his full wages, together with maintenance, medicine, surgical and medical advice and attendance continue. If he is landed abroad, although his wages cease, yet the shipowner is responsible for all else mentioned above until he is cured, or dies, or is brought back to a port in the United Kingdom, together with the expense of his conveyance to that port, and, in case of death abroad, the expense of his burial. It is true that where a seaman is landed at a foreign port there is no fund beyond any wages to which he may be entitled applicable to the relief of wife and family. But here, also, it should be noted that even in cases of illness the shipowner is differently situated to the employer on shore, inasmuch as he has to continue the wages and maintenance, and provide medicine and medical attendance for the seaman during the whole time that he may be ill on board of the ship, and even when he is landed abroad and his wages cease, the shipowner is still responsible for his maintenance and the expense of his passage home to a port in the United Kingdom."

If the Home Secretary intended to give the advantages of this Bill to seamen there should be some alteration of these terms with the view to the State's assuming, to some extent, the liabilities now imposed on shipowners. He thought the House ought to see whether some method other than by this Bill could not be found for dealing with seamen. In other countries there was no form comparable with this Bill, but there were certain means of giving assistance whereby the State joined in the insurance which was necessary. The hon. Member for Stockton the other day had referred to the liabilities of shipowners, and then they had heard the old story about shipowners being a most prosperous lot of people, who could bear any burdens imposed on them. Managing owners were rather lucky, and he did not speak of them when he said that, having considerable experience, he knew no shipowner who in regard to dividends on his invested capital would not have done much better by putting his money in Consols during the last ten years. Upon those shipowners it was proposed to impose a liability very much greater than that for accidents which occurred on shore. And the reason why that liability was so great was because of all the perils of the sea—storms, lightning, shipwreck and so on. These perils did not last for only eight hours out of the twenty-four: they did not last for five or six days in the week, but for the whole voyage, which might last for a year or two. Therefore, these conditions were of a very onerous character to the shipowner—more so than any sort of manufacturers in the Kingdom. There were a great many other questions which arose under the proposals in the Bill. There was the question of salvage. When a boat's crew was sent out to save life, or to save property, who was to bear the burden of compensation if an accident occurred? Was it the shipowner? The circumstances in such cases were quite distinct from accidents on land; and he thought that they were entitled to know from the Home Secretary whether, in bringing in these clauses, he intended to give something to the shipowners which would alleviate their present onerous position. Again, what were the rights of seamen employed on board ships engaged in purely foreign trade? It was a very serious matter to make a ship engaged in foreign trade a factory not only in British waters, but all over the world. If a factory was established by a British firm abroad, and that firm engaged either foreign or British workmen, there was no liability for compensation except under the law of that foreign country. But by transferring this factory legislation to foreign ports and applying it, not only to British and Colonial seamen, but to aliens—say to Chilians—who might be on board a British ship in the Pacific Ocean—they would grant those foreign seamen, who could earn only a few pence a day, compensation for an accident to the extent of £100 or £150. That seemed to be contrary to the policy of not employing foreigners on British ships, and to offer inducements to aliens, whose wives and children were in no way connected with this country, to join these ships. Were all seamen—Asiatics, Lascars, Chilians,—who had a different style of living from British sailors, to have the same rights as the latter? He appealed to the Government to devise some plan by which relief should be given to enable British shipowners, who were at present not too prosperous, to carry on their business successfully. He also appealed, as an employer of labour, to the Labour Members to assist British shipowners by relieving them of the burden of paying compensation to their employees who were not British subjects, and so to enable them to increase the number of British seamen and apprentices on board British ships.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland) said there were several points raised in the debate on which it was right that some answer should be given. The discussion had ranged over several topics which could be more properly discussed on the Committee stage of the Bill, such as the position of fishermen who had ceased to be employees and had become partners, and the definition of temporary and permanent workmen in agriculture. The inclusion of seamen in this Bill was a large question on which the House might expect some reply to the points raised by hon. Members. It was true that the Departmental Committee which examined the question of the Workmen's Compensation Act did say that seamen should be included in the scheme, not by way of the amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act, but by way of the amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act. But that Committee had in mind that a provision to include seamen in the category of workmen might overlap the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, and they did not foresee the proposals made in the Bill now before the House. This Bill was most careful to separate altogether the rights of seamen under the Workmen's Compensation Act and the rights they enjoyed under the Merchant Shipping Act. The proposal of the Bill was that so long as the seaman was on board ship at sea he enjoyed his rights under the Merchant Shipping Act; but so soon as he arrived at a British port he enjoyed the rights of a British workman. The hon. Member for the Everton Division had urged how unjust it would be if a foreign sailor—say a Chilian—who was injured in some port in the Pacific Ocean, could claim the same compensation as a British seaman, if his wife happened to live in the United Kingdom. Such a case would be so extraordinarily rare that it need not be provided for especially. It was said that shipowners should not be liable for compensation because they had no real control over the sailors once the ship left port. But precisely the same argument might be applied to all other great industries. What direct control had, for instance, directors of a railway company from day to day, and hour to hour, over every workman employed on the railway? The day had long gone past when the workman was under the direct control and eye of the employer. Then it was said that the captain of a ship might be put in a dilemma if he saw another ship in distress and hesitated to send a boat's crew to rescue the sailors in that distressed ship. He was sure that such a dilemma would never occur, because every shipowner would insure every seaman on board his ship just as he insured his ship and cargo. The hon. Member for Elgin and Nairn, in a maiden speech, had threatened the British nation with various calamities. He had told the House that ships would be transferred to a foreign flag, that foreign sailors would be employed and that no more British sailors would be employed; but he would point out that the hon. Member's objections would apply to any scheme of compensation. The hon. Member had said that if seamen were compensated at all, it should be under the Merchant Shipping Act; but if they did that precisely the same terrors would ensue. He thought that shipowners—all of whom were not, he was glad to say, speaking in opposition to the Bill—should tell them what they wanted. Did they wish for a lower scale of compensation to the disadvantage of the seaman, or a different procedure so that the seaman should claim under one Act of Parliament instead of under another? It was urged by some that the perils of the sea were so great that the burdens imposed by this Bill would be very heavy. The seaman, they said, was subject to risk for twenty-four hours, while the workman on shore was exposed to risk for only eight or ten hours; but he did not know that it would be any consolation to the widow of a seaman to be told that the reason she got only one-third of the ordinary compensation was that her husband had suffered three times the risk. He did not follow the logic of the proposition at all. When the original Bill was before the House Sir Francis Evans, then the chairman of the Union Steamship Company, and a very large shipowner, proposed an Amendment to include seamen in the Workmen's Compensation Bill, and he said that after making careful calculations over a series of years the whole charge which would be thrown upon the vast undertaking over which he presided was only about £400 a year. Surely that was not an excessive burden. Another shipowner who belonged to the Party to which the hon. Gentleman opposite belonged, Sir Arthur Forwood, also spoke strongly in favour of this proposition, and said that if there was one industry in this country which could be brought without any difficulty under the Bill it was the shipping industry. That Amendment was rejected, and since that time the shipowners had had ten years exemption from any liablity whatever. For those ten years of exemption he thought they were somewhat indebted to the seamen of this country. Another point must also be borne in mind, and that was that the shipowner, unlike the railway owner or the factory owner, paid no poor rate upon his shipping; he paid that impost only upon the small buildings he used as offices. Then again, and lastly upon this matter of the shipping industry, it was largely made the subject of insurance. Shipowners insured their ships, their cargoes and their freights; with regard to no class of business had the system of insurance been more developed; therefore, there would be no difficulty whatever in arranging a system of insurance by which these risks could be covered. He did not think that there was any shipowner in the House or out of it who would say that the ship or cargo or freight which he insured was more precious than the lives of the seamen. Turning to the next question, the inclusion of all occupations and of all employees, his hon. friend the Member for Barnsley and others had urged very strongly that that policy should be pursued. Of course, it was most desirable that the measure should, if possible, be made comprehensive, simple, equal, and final; but, as the Home Secretary had said earlier in the debate, did hon. Members realise the grave hardships which would occur if this measure was extended to all small employers? Artisans very often employed small servants. One of these might be sent on an errand in the course of her employment and meet with an accident, and then the artisan might have to pay her 10s. a week for life. How was it possible that he should do so? The news-agent employed a boy and the boy was sent out on his work and was run over. If he was killed the news-agent would have to pay £100 in a lump sum, or if he was injured he might have to pay 10s. a week for the rest of the boy's life. It was said that the matter might be dealt with by insurance as foreign countries did deal with it by a compulsory method, but as a matter of fact there was no country which extended this system of insurance universally, or which included domestic servants or small employers except in the dangerous trades. Germany had a limit of ten, and the system did not cover cases where less than ten people were employed. Italy and Belgium had a limit of five, while France included only the larger trades. This Bill if passed in its present form would be far more comprehensive than the law of any other country, and would place us ahead of all the other nations of the world in this part of the social reform question. He was dealing with the number of industries covered and the number of employers and workmen, and he said unhesitatingly that there was no country which could show a larger number of workmen who would be covered by a Workmen's Compensation Act than in this country would be covered by this Bill. Then the hon. Member for Barnsley had said that we needed a system of compulsory insurance, and had accused the Government of want of courage in neglecting that question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had admitted that the system of Germany was not suitable to this country, and there was really no system of compulsory insurance in France. All that was given was a State guarantee against the employer.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that in France the man must get his money.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said that the employer must be made a bankrupt before the scheme came into operation. That was a state of things which he was sure would not commend itself to any hon. Member, because they wanted to save the small employer, and did not want to put him in a position in which he was made bankrupt, as was the system in France. Then it had been said that it was possible through the Post Office or some other means to establish a general insurance organisation under which all persons should be required to be insured. But under a system of that kind, how was it possible to check the claims which would be made? True, the Post Office gave annuities, and in the case of the death of an annuitant the fact was easily ascertainable. But how could a Department like the Post Office ascertain whether a man was injured while at work or not, whether he was no longer fit for work, and a number of other delicate questions which must arise in connection with a matter of this kind? That system would involve that the State should, out of hand, accept any claim which was made, or they would be put in the position of fighting the workman in a court of law. That point raised a very serious dilemma which should be considered by those who advocated such a system. There were others who said that in a system of State insurance there ought to be a clause compelling employers to insure all their employees in some insurance company. Had hon. Members considered the means by which a section of that sort could be enforced? Was it proposed that inspectors should go down every street and knock at every door and ask for the insurance policy of every servant in the house, or of every employée in a factory? This was a very large question, and it might possibly be considered, but it could not be settled in a hurry as hon. Members proposed. There might indeed be a system of compulsion not existing under any Act of Parliament, but enforced merely by the risk of loss, which would fall upon the employer if he did not insure. We all insured our houses in case of fire, not because the law required us to do so, but because we knew the penalty which would fall upon us if we did not do so and a fire happened. So a system under which loss would be the natural result of neglect or carelessness would be the natural system of compulsion. Compulsion would in many cases give rise to great hardship, but it was, as his right hon. friend had said, a matter that was open for consideration whether the benefits which would follow from such a course would not be more than outweighed by the drawbacks. It had been complained that his right hon. friend had been too ready to leave matters to the decision of the House. He might say that this course had not been lightly taken, nor had it been taken without consideration. It was one of their chief complaints against the late Government that they refused to leave matters to the House, and they had complained that there should have been on the Ministerial Benches in the last Parliament such a docile majority ready to approve whatever measures were laid before Parliament by a self-confident Government. On more than one occasion Bills were forced through the House as though they were inspired measures, not a single Amendment being permitted, in order that the report stage might be avoided. Therefore, he could well understand that hon. Members on the Opposition side were surprised that the House of Commons should be asked actually to legislate. There had been much talk about the decline of the House of Commons and its power in recent years, but he believed that such a decline as there had been was mainly and almost solely due to the deliberate policy of the late Executive, which required that the House should be subordinate to its wishes. The House of Commons shared with the Administration the responsibilities of government. He trusted that in Committee hon. Members would assist them to frame a measure which would be thoroughly satisfactory, and that the result of the deliberations in Committee would be further to improve a measure which even in its present form he believed would do great good to the nation.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) moved that the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD protested against this course being taken, more especially after the speech of the Under-Secretary. A strong complaint was made against the late Government that they refused to leave measures to the House, and the hon. Member also said that they allowed no Report stage. He could not allow that statement for a moment to go unchallenged.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said that at the very beginning of his speech he said that it was proposed that this Bill should be sent to the Standing Committee on Law, which was a microcosm of this House, and then the House as a whole would have a further opportunity of considering the main points on the Report stage.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD complained that a question of this kind should be sent upstairs instead of being discussed in Committee of the whole House. This practice of sending important measures upstairs was gradually breaking down the whole system of Grand Committees. It was bound to break down the principle of Grand Committees, which had done so much in the past in dealing with non-contentious measures. Moreover, since this particular Bill affected shipping as well, it ought to be discussed in Committee of the House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the right hon. Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent had agreed to the Standing Committee. The Factory Act of 1901 was sent to the Standing Committee on Trade, and on that occasion the whole of the Factory and Workshops Acts were consolidated into a single measure. Therefore, the sending of this measure to a Committee upstairs was a much less important matter than the Act of 1901.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said he wished to support the objection made by his right hon. friend against sending this Bill to the Grand Committee. It was an entirely non-controversial measure, and the Committee stage would not take up much time. A good many hon. Members who had expert knowledge would be able to offer useful criticism in deciding many points in connection with the question as to which classes of workpeople this Bill should be extended to. Upon a former occasion when they had a Workmen's Compensation Bill the Committee stage had invariably been taken in Committee of the whole House. This was a most important measure, and it was evident from the discussion that there was in all quarters of the House, a most friendly feeling towards the Bill and a general desire to hasten its passage into law and to make it as perfect a measure as possible. Upon these grounds and on the understanding that the Opposition would give an undertaking to assist in passing the Bill speedily through its Committee Stage he hoped the Home Secretary would agree to have the Bill referred to a Committee of the whole House.

MR. GLADSTONE said the hon. Member had told the House that this Bill was of a non-controversial nature. That was precisely the reason for sending it upstairs. It was common knowledge that the Compensation Bill introduced by the late Government last session was intended to be sent to the Grand Committee. He would further remind the House that this Bill did not raise any great questions which had not already been fully discussed. It was full of detail and was non-controversial, and for those reasons he hoped the House would send it to the Standing Committee on Law.

MR. WALTER LONG said he did not attach much importance to the precedents of the late Government, because he remembered that whatever the Bills were they were firmly resisted by the Opposition, who invariably pointed out that they would break down the Grand Committee. All who had served upon Grand Committees knew the inconvenience of having to attend so many Committees, which made a great demand upon their time. The objection taken to this Bill being sent upstairs was entirely on the ground of inconvenience to hon. Members and not to delay the business. He hoped the Government would remember that by sending so many important Bills upstairs they were placing a very heavy strain upon Members of the House of Commons.

Question put and agreed to.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

OPEN SPACES BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY said that this was a consolidating Bill, very much the same as was passed in the House of Lords in 1904. It was purely uncontentious. He begged to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [Lords].

Read a second time and committed for Tuesday, April 24th.

DEAN FOREST BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) said that this was simply a departmental measure to enable the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to exchange parcels of waste land in the Forest of Dean.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented four clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel, or agents be heard against the Bill, and counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

CROWN LANDS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said that the object of this Bill was to transfer the management of certain Crown lands from the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to other departments. He thought that the management by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests was not satisfactory, and by way of illustration he might take their action in regard to small holdings. There was a strong feeling in the country, and he believed the feeling was equally strong in this House, that the condition of rural England would be considerably improved by increasing the number of small holdings. If that were so, and he did not think he need argue it, one would naturally expect that the proportion of Crown lands devoted to the purpose of small holdings would certainly not be less than the proportion so devoted upon the best managed private estates. But as a matter of fact it was not so. The Secretary of the Treasury had recently informed him that among the whole agricultural portion of Crown lands there were only 236 small holdings. By a small holding he meant a holding under fifty acres. The hon. Gentleman had given him some details with regard to the holdings, and by working them out he found that there were 2,000 acres devoted to small holdings out of a total of 70,000 acres. That compared very unfavourably with the case of estates privately owned. The Earl of Howe, for instance, owned an estate of 14,000 acres, of which no fewer than 2,000 acres were devoted to small holdings. The Secretary of the Treasury had also stated that the Woods and Forests Commissioners had recently sold a considerable number of small holdings in Wales. He understood that these small holdings were sold to neighbouring proprietors, and he doubted very much whether any considerable part of these lands were devoted to small holdings at all. He demurred altogether to the policy of selling Crown lands. One did not need to be a land nationaliser to object to property which was at present owned by the State being sold right out. That was not necessary for the success of small holdings. On the contrary, experience ran rather the other way. What was wanted was that the occupier of a small holding should have reasonable security that he would be able to reap where he had sown. He demurred to the policy of selling these lands to the neighbouring proprietors, for experience had shown that sooner or later the lands ceased to be small holdings altogether. With regard to the action of the Woods and Forests Department in the slate producing districts of Wales, there had long been a want of house accommodation, and the Welsh Land Commission of ten years ago recommended that the Woods and Forests Commissioners should utilise part of their waste lands, of which there were considerable areas in Merionethshire and Carnarvonshire, for the purpose of small holdings, and also that they should erect or give facilities for erecting houses upon these holdings. He believed that little or nothing had been done in the way of carrying out that recommendation. The Commission said that the Woods and Forests Commissioners had never approached the administration of the Crown lands in Wales either with adequate knowledge or upon correct principles. They also suggested that a new Commission should be appointed, with the powers of the Supreme Court, to make a minute investigation into the titles of the proprietors of lands bordering upon the Crown lands. He ventured to say that if that recommendation were carried out the Commission so appointed would have brought before it very startling evidence. It was evident from these facts that the Woods and Forests Commissioners in the administration of the Crown lands pursued a bad tradition. They had pursued a consistent policy of adding field to field and farm to farm. They did not believe in sub-dividing holdings. They had constantly consolidated them. On the other hand there had been established comparatively recently another department, the Board of Agriculture, which represented modern ideas, and it had at its head a nobleman who was singularly keen in the matter of small holdings and warmly sympathised with the democracy respecting the proper tenure and use of land. Naturally one would have thought that the administration of the Crown lands, which were really national estate, should be entrusted to the Board of Agriculture. There was actually under the Board of Agriculture Act provision made for the transfer to that Board of the powers of other departments in regard to matters where agriculture was concerned. He did not suggest that the transfer of the Crown lands could be made under that provision to the Board of Agriculture, but he merely mentioned the provision as indicating the opinion of Parliament that the Board of Agriculture was the proper authority for administrative purposes in such cases. He was anxious that these lands should be transferred from the Woods and Forests Commissioners to the Board of Agriculture. He did not admit that if they were administered by that Board the revenue would necessarily be diminished, or that any injury would really be done to the lands. The House were told the other night by the Secretary of the Treasury that the Woods and Forests Department were not free to deal with these lands—that they were bound to administer them for the benefit of the Crown. He must really demur from that statement and what it seemed to imply. He submitted that the Crown had really nothing more than a technical or nominal interest in these lands. He believed that the freehold of the lands had never been actually divested out of the Crown, but the Crown had no personal interest in the administration of these lands at all. They were, in fact, national estate, and when so many hon. Members were pledged to promote reforms in regard to the land, it seemed to him that they should encourage better tenure and better use of the land of this country. They could not do better than begin at home. There was no reform which lay more at hand, was more practical or more convenient, than the better administration of what he rightly called national estate. If these lands were transferred to the Board of Agriculture they might be administered better and more in accordance with the way in which the most enlightened private owners administered theirs. He was sorry that the Government had not included in the Bill now before the House a provision for the transfer to the Board of Agriculture of the Crown lands. This Bill referred only to foreshores. It might be necessary that the management of foreshores should be taken from the Woods and Forests Department, but it was infinitely more important that the agricultural portion of these lands should be transferred to the Board of Agriculture. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'No Bill dealing with the transfer of the management of certain Crown lands from the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to another department will be satisfactory to this House unless it provides for the transfer of the control and management of the agricultural portion of those lands to the Board of Agriculture.'"—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. McKENNA said that when this Bill got into Committee he would be able to show his hon. friend a clause which the Government proposed to introduce, and which, though it would not give him all he asked, would meet his wishes sufficiently to be satisfactory to him, and would not rouse the opposition of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. It was in substance proposed to increase the number of the Commissioners by adding to that body the President of the Board of Agriculture for the time being, if he was willing to serve. That would leave the constitution of the Commission the same as it was now—that was to say, their statutory powers would continue exactly as they were at this moment, but it would enable this House to criticise the action of the Commissioners with more authority and with greater ease, because they would have a Minister in the House directly responsible for the administration of the Department. At the present moment the Secretary of the Treasury was made responsible for the administration of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and the other evening he was called to account in consequence of an act done by the Commissioners no less than forty-five years ago. It was certainly unfortunate as things stood at present that the House had no effective opportunity of criticising the work of that body. It was true it was not proposed to hand over the whole power of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to the Board of Agriculture, and he thought for a very good reason. He could not agree with the view which his hon. friend took of the law. These Crown lands were not, as his hon. friend thought, a national estate at all. It was quite true that during the life of the individual Sovereign the claim of the Sovereign to these properties was only a bare legal claim; but on the demise of the Crown, the property passed to the next heir, and it was given to the nation in exchange for the Civil List. It was a bargain which was made each time, and he did not think they ought to wish hastily to deprive the Sovereign of his interest in that property in consideration of what was given to him by the Civil List. They were all at one in this matter now. What they desired was to secure a more progressive and enlightened policy in the management of the Crown Lands; and what he desired was that the responsibility for the administration of the Crown Lands should be in the hands of some Minister who should have some real control over them. This, he hoped, would be secured by the new management which would be introduced by the provisions of this Bill. With that assurance he trusted that his hon. and learned friend would withdraw his Amendment.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said that the observations of the hon. Gentleman raised a point of considerable importance which ought not to be passed over without proper consideration. He did not altogether hold with the view that the administration of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had been quite so obsolete as had been alleged; because during his short experience in office, the Commissioners were fully prepared to meet, as far as possible, the views and wishes of the House of Commons. He would point out that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests were responsible for a very considerable amount of revenue which was a sensible addition to the Exchequer. The duty of the Commissioners was not only to act as model landlords, but to do their best to maintain that revenue. He expressed the hope that in any change which the Treasury introduced they would still consider the great importance of not taking any step which would have the result of diminishing that revenue; and that in the administration of the Crown Lands they would not attempt any rash experiments in regard to land tenure. He hoped that the Secretary of the Treasury would be able to bring in his scheme of reform at a time when it could be fully discussed, and not driven through in the small hours of the morning. He offered his most hearty congratulations to the Secretary of the Treasury, and expressed his own personal envy that that hon. Gentleman was in a more fortunate position than he himself had been in, when, on two previous occasions, this Bill was introduced the hon. Member for Mid Lanark threatened him with a speech against the Bill which would last for three hours! No doubt, the watchful eye of that hon. Member was still cast on this class of legislation; but the present Government was in a more fortunate position than when he sat on the Treasury Bench.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he was glad to hear that the Government were going to try and improve the management of the Crown Lands and thereby show a good example to other landlords. They knew from the President of the Board of Agriculture, Lord Carrington, that he could manage his estates on the small holdings system and make more money out of them than under the old large holdings system. Why could not the Government do the same thing? He was sorry that the name of the Sovereign had been brought into this question. That was very unfair. Chapter 4 of Act 1, Edward VII., stated that these Crown Lands were unreservedly given over to the Government of this country to be managed in the interest of the nation, in exchange for the Civil List. He knew that there was a considerable income derived from this Crown property. Last year £470,000 was paid into the Exchequer from them. At one time the Sovereign had to pay out of these funds all the cost of the diplomatic service, the Army, and the allowances to the members of the Royal Family. It was national property and the Sovereign could not alienate a single acre of this property, and now that the Government had the management of it, why could they not put it on a good business footing? At present £20,000 was asked from Parliament for management; but that was deceiving the House, because last year the management actually cost some £150,000. Why should not full details be given as in regard to other departments of administration?

*MR. SPEAKER: The criticism on which the hon. Member has embarked does not seem to be relevant to this Bill. It is more relevant to the Estimates.

*MR. MORTON said he thought that the Government should consider this matter in Committee on this Bill, and bring this fund into proper order. At any rate, he was glad that something was going to be done to put the management of the Crown property on a business-like footing. It should be taken out of the hands of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and handed over to the Agricultural Department. He had no doubt that if that were done, in the course of a very short time, especially under the guidance of the present President of the Board of Agriculture, matters would be put into proper order. The cost of management was now very excessive.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford) thought that hon. Members might congratulate themselves on the discussion which had been initiated on this question.

He and his friends were delighted to think that the Government were prepared to give some attention to the remarks which had been made upon the subject, and that they were going to give the House an opportunity of an effective discussion on the administration of Crown property by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. He did not think there was any desire whatever for any diminution of the revenue from these lands. What was wanted was the adoption of a more progressive system of administration; and if that were carried out he believed that not only would the present revenue be realised, but that it would be increased.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): This subject came before me when I was at the Board of Agriculture, and I took considerable interest in it. I desired that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests should be under the Board of Agriculture, not because I had reason to believe that the administration was unsatisfactory—quite the contrary—or in order that we might experiment on that property without risk of diminishing the income, but because we had a good Board of Agriculture, and it seemed to me that it would be able to do very good work if the Department was under the Board and not under the Treasury. I cannot quite view with approval the suggestion of the Secretary of the Treasury. I understand that the suggestion is not that the Woods and Forests and their administration should be put under the Board of Agriculture, but that the President of the Board of Agriculture should be associated with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests as a joint commissioner. I hope that ample notice will be given of the Amendment, which is certainly one that I would be inclined to resist. There are one or two offices in which the heads of other departments are associated with the Minister, and there cannot be a worse system in the interests both of the Minister and of the State. A Minister cannot be described as responsible to the House and the country unless he is in a position to say, "This or that is to be done in a particular way." Unless a Minister is master in his own house it is a mere farce to say he is responsible to this House. The proposal of the Secretary to the Treasury will not alter the relations of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to the House in the slightest degree. The hon. Gentleman has suggested that the arrangement proposed would enable the House to review the proceedings of the Commissioners; but the House can review them even now through the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that with the present Minister of Agriculture there was a certainty of reform, and that we should get better administration; but I hold that we will not get either reform or better administration by the scheme which the Government have suggested. The administration will not be altered at all, while the Minister for Agriculture will be exposed to every sort of attack in this House, having a nominal responsibility, but no power. I believe that it is perfectly possible to make the Woods and Forests a Department under the Board of Agriculture. The real difficulty is that the Department of Woods and Forests is under the Treasury, and before they can make any fresh departure the department must have the consent of the Treasury. The Treasury looks at the question from the point of view of revenue returned, and not of agricultural administration. Although we have a department specially charged to look after the interests of agriculture, it has no power by the expenditure of money and the user of land to carry on a general system of agricultural experiments. The difficulty might be overcome if the President of the Board of Agriculture was able to act as the chairman of the Department of Woods and Forests in the Cabinet, and get the necessary sums of money. I am sorry that the Government have decided, apparently in a hurry, to make this grave departure. I do not think that any former Minister of Agriculture would concur in the view of the hon. Gentleman. I regard the change as misleading, and I do not believe it will have the effect desired by the hon. Gentleman. Therefore, I repeat that if the Government intend to proceed with this new Amendment, I hope they will put it on the Paper in good time, so that we may have ample opportunity for discussing it.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said that after the statement made by the Secretary to the Treasury he asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented four clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum.—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Order read, for assuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th March], " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY said he would remind the House that this Bill was founded on the practically unanimous Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to consider the working of the Act of 1893. Since the Bill was last discussed in the House he had had a conference with several Members of the House and representatives of the traders, when various points were discussed. With reference to Sub-clause 2, Clause 1, it was pointed out to him that it would be unfair to the traders that under that sub-clause there should be a disclosure of the analysis of the goods sold. That was a fair and reasonable objection, and if the Bill was sent to the Standing Committee on Law he would move an Amendment to provide that there should be nothing in the way of a disclosure of trade secrets. Another objection was that there should be a formal and official analysis before a criminal prosecution could take place in regard to the adulteration of fertilisers. He agreed to that, and would move an Amendment accordingly in Committee. Then objection was taken that there should be a time limit as in other Acts. He agreed to that, and would move an Amendment that there should be a limit of three months, beyond which a criminal prosecution should not be instituted. The Bill was one of great importance, because agriculturists and traders were not satisfied with the Act of 1893, and it was necessary to put the law on a more satisfactory basis. It was desirable that they should have a good workable Bill, which would be in no sense unfair to the traders and at the same time would give the protection which agriculturists required.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said that the Amendments indicated by the hon. Baronet would remove grave objections to which the Bill was open. The remarks of the hon. Baronet showed that although the Bill arose out of the Report of the Select Committee of two years ago, it had not received adequate consideration by the department either in the last Parliament or in this. The Bill had already been discussed in the House this session, and it was only now that the hon. Baronet had announced these concessions to traders. It was a very wide Bill, and he did not think that a measure of this kind, creating a new crime, with serious penalties, should be passed *sub silentio.* He did not like measures which created new crimes, and he especially objected to one which made a man disclose his processes of manufacture. The concessions which the hon. Baronet had made would remove some objections to the Bill, but still some exception could be taken to it. He thought it extremely unfair that in a case of this kind, as in the case of the Wireless Telegraphy Bill, which was discussed two or three weeks ago, the proprietor of some particular commodity or scientific system should be obliged at the instance of an individual to divulge what were in fact his trade secrets. The representative of the Board of Agriculture had not stated what the cost of administering this Bill was going to be, and he thought the House ought to know. The Department was going to appoint agricultural analysts, and he should like to know what these men were going to be paid. It was provided that the chief analyst should not be engaged in private practice. It was also laid down that every county council "shall" appoint, and that every county borough "may" appoint. It seemed too that the county council should appoint at their discretion. The effect of the clause, moreover, was that anybody who occupied a farm, either for the purposes of trade or enjoyment, could not be an analyst. That he thought was wrong. There was no reason why they should exclude the practical farmer or the chemist. Clause 3 was extremely stringent and unfair, and it gave absolutely no safeguard to the man who sold or produced these products. Under the clause as it stood, no notice need be given to a man against whom criminal proceedings were to be commenced, and no proof was to be demanded that the sample submitted to the analyst should be taken from the goods against which the complaint was made. In that clause, originally, there was no time limit, and the introduction of a three months limit removed one of the great hardships inflicted under the clause; but even with that concession he did not think the protection afforded to traders was sufficient. There was no guarantee whatever that the food stuff inspected by the analyst should be brought before him in proper and decent condition, and not exposed to atmospheric conditions which might have affected its purity by setting up different chemical conditions. He thanked the hon. Baronet for the conciliatory attitude he had shown, and he hoped when the Bill went to Committee the hon. Baronet would allow it to be fully considered, bearing in mind that not only were the interests of agriculture concerned, but that the interests of a large number of respectable traders were touched by the Bill.

*MR. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral) said he was one of the Members of the Liverpool deputation, and speaking on behalf of those he represented they were not afraid of being accused of new crimes. The desire of the traders affected by the Bill was to meet the Board of Agriculture, recognising that that Department had in their care the interests of the consumers of these articles as well as the interests of the producers. All that they asked for was that there should be some definiteness introduced into the Bill. They objected to the clause which made them disclose trade secrets. That had been met, and as far as they were concerned the introduction of the time limit and a clear statement as to the conditions under which the samples were to be taken and the analysis effected had also met their views. They did not feel that the Bill as proposed to be amended by the hon. Baronet was objectionable, and they had no further opposition to make. They felt that the interests of the farmers had to be safeguarded and that the interests of the producers of these articles should be similarly dealt with whilst safeguarding consumers. Now that this was the express intention of the hon. Baronet they had no objection to the Bill.

MR. W. PEARCE (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) said there had been serious apprehensions on the part of many Members as to this Bill, but the hon. Baronet had to a large extent removed them. He understood that a prosecution would not be allowed on a single analysis, and that the regulations would provide that the information should be sent to the seller before any prosecution was supported by the Board of Agriculture, These concessions had very much improved the Bill and prevented, so far as could be, the possibility of mistakes, which the manufacturers of fertilisers were anxious to avoid.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) thought it was a pity that the Board of Agriculture should introduce a highly technical Bill of this kind when an excellent and simple Bill introduced by a private Member was already before the House. He very much regretted that the Government had not adopted the Bill introduced a few weeks ago.

The Government measure would take a long time in Committee, and tend to delay the work of the Committee.

Lord BALCARRES said by leave of the House he would ask a Question of the hon. Baronet. The hon. Member for Limehouse said it was proposed that no prosecution should take place on a single sample. Was that the case?

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: No criminal prosecution, certainly.

Lord BALCARRES: That is not in the Bill now.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: If it is necessary, we will undertake to provide that no criminal prosecution shall take place upon a single analysis.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

And, there being no further business set down for the Afternoon Sitting Mr. Speaker left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

LOCAL OPTION.

*Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) rose to call attention to the Local Option Laws in force in the colonies, and to move, "That this House notes with satisfaction the successful working of the Local Option Laws in the colonies, and approves the principle on which these laws are based—namely, that the people ought to possess the power through a vote of the local electors to protect themselves against the admitted evils of the liquor traffic." He trusted that no one would think that in bringing forward this Motion he was inviting the House to waste time in fruitless discussion, or in the idle contemplation of matters with which they had no concern. On the contrary, he ventured to claim that the question he was raising had a double interest for them. It related to an important series of legislative efforts on the part of our self-governing colonies to solve a social problem which vitally affected their well-being and their progress, and which could not therefore be of indifference to this House; and the consideration of these laws would tend to edification inasmuch as their underlying principle would, in his judgment, be of infinite value to them when, not for the first or the fiftieth time, they again essayed the solution of the same problem. The Resolution spoke of "the admitted evils of the liquor traffic." He would not pause to describe or to enumerate these evils. They were familiar to every one; they were the commonplaces of the law courts, of the platform, of the pulpit. They had almost become by constant repetition, "a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong." These evils and dangers were as great, as intolerable in the colonies as here. There, as here, the figures of the consumption of drink were a faithful index of the amount of crime, poverty, disease and misery which prevailed. To protect themselves from these evils, our colonies had generally borrowed from this country the essential features of our long-tried licensing system. He was told that there were advocates of liberty so extreme, so opposed to any limitations upon their freedom of action, that they resented the control implied by such a system, and held that liquor should be sold as freely as any other commodity. He had never met these people: he did not know if there were any in this House; they had certainly not made themselves felt in the colonies. The only case where a community had tried free sale, so far as he had been able to ascertain, was in Charlotte Town, Prince Edward's Isle, and there the results were so appalling that the revulsion was correspondingly violent, and at the present time there is absolute prohibition in that city, and indeed throughout the island. In other cases, the colonies, wherever drink was sold, had set up a licensing system, but they had done so not exactly as in this country, but on what the Prime Minister on Thursday called "an intelligible and reasonable and logical basis." What were the essential and logical elements of a just and complete licensing system? First, the common sale of intoxicating liquors was prohibited, and this prohibition rested upon and could only be justified by the known and admittedly dangerous character of such liquors. But, secondly, recognition of the dangerous character of these intoxicants did not extinguish the desire for them, nor had it led to a general abandonment of the practice of drinking them. Therefore, to satisfy this thirst, to meet this desire, certain exceptional persons were chosen to dispense these potent liquors in specified places; and these exceptional facilities were granted by local licensing authorities, whose duty it was to sanction only such sale as should cause no injury to the community. Licences were to be issued only in the public interest and for the public good. In our country the magistrates had been the interpreters and regulators of the public interest. But our colonies were more logical. Seeing that the common sale was dangerous and therefore prohibited, and seeing that exceptions were made to this general law in the public interest and for the public good, they recognised that it was right and desirable and practicable that the people should decide for themselves as to their requirements and their interests, and before any licences were issued the people were invited to vote upon the question whether or not licences for the sale of intoxicants should or should not be issued. If the vote was for licences, licences were granted by the authority; if against, no licences could be issued. Such was the general system in the colonies; the details varied, the principle remained the same. The verdict of the people was operative, decisive, mandatory. One general rule might be noticed, that while for continuance or for reduction a bare majority sufficed, in order to carry "no licence" a two-thirds or three-fifths majority was usually requisite, as it had been wisely recognised that in order to enforce laws of this character there must be behind them a heavy weight of public opinion. Taking the case of the individual colonies, throughout Canada they had local option prevailing, either under a federal or under a provincial statute. There were some large districts which were without any licences at all. This was the case in Quebec in 603 out of 933 municipalities. In Ontario there had been, year by year, a steady reduction in licences. In 1874 there were 6,185, and in 1902 there were 2,947. In Toronto in 1874 the population was 60,000, and the licences 530. In 1905 the population was 250,000 and the licences 207. In New Brunswick all but five counties were without licences; in Nova Scotia sixteen out of eighteen counties, and in Prince Edward's Island all. In the Australian colonies there was practically the same system. In South Australia the law of 1891 gave the option of increase as well as the option of decrease, and in their determination to give sufficient warning to the liquor traffic the authorities who passed the law gave a fifteen-years time limit before the Bill came into force. A poll had just been taken in six districts, and 34,000 voted in favour of reduction and only 21,000 in favour of the continuance of the present licences, so that in five districts there would be a reduction of one-third of the licences. The New South Wales Licensing Law was passed last year, and he did not think the poll had yet been taken, at all events they had not received the returns. That was a threefold option. The vote for continuance could be carried by a bare majority, and a bare majority could also carry a reduction, but for no licences a three-fifths majority had to vote, and it must not be by less than 30 per cent. of the electorate. In New Zealand a similar Act had been in operation since 1895, and under that Act no fewer than four polls had been held at intervals of three years, and the results had been very remarkable. The districts were the same electoral districts as for the House of Representatives, sixty-eight of them altogether, and the electors, men and women, were the same as those who voted for that body. They had a threefold option. They could vote for the continuance of the existing number of licences, for the reduction to be left to the discretion of the licensing authority within limits of not less than 5 and not more than 25 per cent., and, thirdly, there was a possibility of a vote of no licences, which could only be carried by a three-fifths majority. The figures given at these polls were well worth studying

The number of voters was steadily increasing, showing that the interest in these polls was growing, and the number of voters in favour of no licence had grown in a most extraordinary manner. In 1896, 98,312 out of 259,898 voted for no licences; in 1899, 118,575 out of a total of 281,822; in 1902, 151,524 out of a total of 318,859; and in 1905, 199,354 out of a total of 352,079 For no licences the percentage of total votes was in 1896, 37 per cent.; in 1899, 42 per cent.; in 1902, 47 per cent. in 1905, 56 per cent. These results were spread throughout the colony. He had not the returns for 1905, but in 1902 the result of the vote was that reduction was carried in nine districts, and no licence in six districts out of a total of sixty-eight. The advantages of this system were visible and recognised by practically all who had studied the life of our colonies. In the first place, large areas were cleared of the traffic. They were zones of safety and comfort, where people might withdraw themselves from the nuisance and discomfort caused by public houses. As a result rents in those uncontaminated zones were generally higher. Secondly, in districts where reduction was enforced or where there was the possibility of it, the standard of conduct of the licensed houses was raised. Dependent for their continuance on public favour, the publicans strove to avoid outraging the feelings of the people on whose goodwill they depended. Thirdly, the average consumption of liquor was reduced, which was an immense economic advantage directly and indirectly. The consumption was in Canada about one-fourth, in Australia and New Zealand from one-fourth to one-third. The principle was not new to this House, which had many times endorsed it by large majorities. Great leaders of both Parties had blessed it, and Lord Randolph Churchill in 1888 brought in a Bill embodying the principle. In 1893 Sir W. Harcourt said—

> "It rests on a broad, solid and democratic basis. We say that if there ever was a question, on which the will of the people ought to be pronounced and ought to prevail, it is this question which so deeply affects their social and material and moral advantage."

Mr. Gladstone on the same occasion said—

> "It is the just right of the population to exercise under fair conditions that control in respect to the granting of licences for the sale of liquor by retail which has heretofore rested, without dispute, in the hands of the proprietors of the soil. I do not understand how it is possible to contest that proposition."

To the Government he appealed with especial confidence for support. Last year there was a Scotch Veto Bill before this House in which this principle was embodied, and twenty-two Members of the present Government voted for the Second Reading of that Bill, including ten Cabinet Ministers—amongst them the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Home Secretary. And surely the principle which he was advocating was one which it was right for all Liberals to support. What was the liberty of which they were the servants? Not freedom to do what they willed, but the opportunity to do right. This principle of local option would be a limitation on absolute freedom of action if they chose so to regard it, yet none the less was it an increase of liberty in its nobler sense, bringing with it enlarged opportunities and a higher standard of life. It was consonant with the principles which underlay most of our recent legislative progress. Education Acts, Sanitary Acts, Factory Acts, all of them interfered more or less with freedom. Under the Education Act they sent the child unwillingly to school; they refused to allow the parent to sacrifice the child's interest; they interfered with liberty; they enlarged the child's opportunities. Under the Factory Acts they interfered with employer and employed, and yet the standard of life was raised. So in our Colonies they had found out that by sacrificing the not very precious privilege of selling drink at every street corner, or on every choicest site in town or country, their streets were purer and freer from temptation and offence, their opportunities were larger, their standard of life was higher, their homes were brighter than when the liquor traffic flourished unchecked by the people's will. Our Colonies pointed out to us the path of wisdom and of safety, and to-night he invited the House to walk therein.

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) said that in seconding the Motion of his hon. friend he intended to keep the House for only a few moments. He thought no apology was needed for bringing this question in the form of a Resolution before this new House of Commons, for he thought it would be admitted by all that the evil with which the Resolution proposed to deal was one of the greatest and the most difficult social problems which this country had ever been called upon to face. If emphatic testimony was required as to the magnitude of this evil it was to be found in the conclusive statement made by the majority of the Royal Commissioners which reported in 1899. They said—

> "It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

It should be remembered that this pronouncement was given by a Commission containing eight representatives connected with the liquor traffic, and after an inquiry lasting three years. In his opinion, an evil so great, so far-reaching in its consequences, touching as it did every phase of life, should in no sense be made a Party question. Admitting as they did that a great evil existed, there was room for considerable difference of opinion as to the remedy to be applied. The Motion of his hon. friend suggested one remedy, but it was not the only one that had been proposed. It was not by any means the only remedy that they as politicians and as representing their constituencies were prepared to consider. They were prepared to give the most careful consideration to any proposal that might be suggested for dealing with this question. He thought, however, that his hon. friend had made out an excellent case in favour of the principle of his Motion. He had brought very clearly before the House the experience and practice of several of the Colonies. He had shown how the people had used the power when it had been conferred upon them. He himself desired to advance one or two reasons why the people in this country should be brought into line with those Colonies of which the House had just heard. Many attempts had been made to legislate upon this particular question. Scores and scores of Acts of Parliament had been passed for the purpose of regulating in some measure the great evil of intemperance, and he had been brought to the conclusion that an effective remedy would never be secured until the people themselves were given directly the full sense of their responsibility in this matter. Their democratic instincts must be appealed to and the consciousness given that they had been trusted to settle that which was their own vital concern. He thought the House would agree that during late years the country had advanced far under the spirit of democracy. The people had gradually been entrusted with the management of their own immediate concerns. Many monuments were now standing as proofs of the truly magnificent manner in which the democracy had discharged its responsibilities. What then, he would ask, was the reason for supposing that if they were entrusted with the power of settling this question, they would do other than they had done with other great questions which affected them? If they were entrusted with the power to settle that which tended to beautify and ennoble life, why should Parliament decline to trust them with a power of control over that which was admitted to be an instrument of social deterioration? In this connection he would point out that during late years there had been a great increase in the number of owners of single houses. Many working men had sunk all their savings in house properties through the medium of the building society or some other agency. They had acquired these little castles of their own, and he had met many such who had deplored that they had no power to prevent the establishment of a licensed house against their property. They knew full well how their property was depreciated by the existence of these licensed houses. Then in asking for this power of control they only desired to be placed on an equality with many of the landlords throughout the country who created prohibition areas so far as licensed houses were concerned. As an instance of English prohibition areas, let them take Roe Green, a colliery village, North of Manchester, with a population of over 700. Public-houses were closed on the petition of the inhabitants to the Bridgwater Trustees, who owned the village. The village was remarkable for cleanliness and good order. Many lived in their own houses. The churches and chapels were well supported and attended. Another instance was that of Throckley, six miles west of Newcastle, a pit village, of 2,000 population, and this had been a prohibition area for thirty years. Then there was Toxteth Park, Liverpool, the population of which was over 60,000. This had been a prohibition area since 1880. The population was largely working class, and houses were always in demand. He believed he was right in saying that the Citizens, Labourers, and General Dwellings Company, of London, prohibited their area. They owned Shaftesbury Park Estate, Battersea, of forty-two and a half acres; Queen's Park, Harrow Road, seventy-six acres; Noel Park, Wood Green, N., 100 acres; and Leigham Court, Streatham, S.W., sixty-six acres. The population numbered about 40,000. The directors reported that the losses of rent did not on an average amount to 1s. per £100. Surely if it were right for landed proprietors and companies to protect their property by prohibition, it was more right that a majority of workmen should have the power to protect their wives and children from all the temptations associated with the administration of the liquor laws of this country. Doubtless they would be told that they should trust the licensing justices. The same argument had been advanced before, though perhaps it would not be advanced with the same amount of force as was the case in former debates. The Act that had transferred the power from the local magistrates to the county magistrates had taken the sting out of the argument that the working classes ought to trust the magistrates in the administration of the licensing laws. This subject was by no means new to the House of Commons. On June 8th, 1880, a very similar Resolution to that under discussion was passed, the numbers being 229 for and 203 against. That was re-affirmed on June 14th, 1881, by a majority of 42. Again in 1883, a similar Resolution was carried by a majority of 87. The principle of the Resolution was recommended by the minority of the Royal Commission. In the addendum signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, his hon. friend the Member for the Spen Valley, and others, were these words—

> "That the people in every part of the United Kingdom should have power, by a substantial majority vote, taken by the widest franchise in force, to prevent any premises being licensed to sell intoxicating liquors in their respective localities."

It might be urged that that was not the Majority Report. That, to his mind, was a very strong argument in its favour. It suggested itself to him that a majority consisting of eight prominent members of the liquor trade were never going to sign a recommendation which, if put into operation, would be most likely an effective remedy for the present evil. He would like to give one more quotation. He admitted that it was a long time since the statement was made, but so far as he was concerned it was as effective to-day as when it was originally uttered. It was as follows—

> "The attempt to deal with this subject for the people, and without the people, has been a conspicuous failure. Acts have been passed, and tried, and thrown aside, and the evil remains unabated. I do not wonder, then, sometimes that good and earnest men should despair, in presence of the persistent continuance of the evil, of being able to find any successful remedy. But when statesmen have only made the matter worse—when Parliament has legislated to no purpose—I am still sanguine that the people themselves, if wholly trusted, would do something to mitigate the plague and to stay its ravages."

That was said a long time ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but to his mind it was as true to-day as it was then. Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman had recently emphatically reminded the country that "What I have said I have said," he was perfectly justified in quoting what he had in favour of the Motion of his hon. friend. Experience showed that the House, though it had made many attempts to deal with the subject, had failed to deal with it on the principle of trusting the people, and he therefore hoped that to-night this new Parliament in its first session would accept this principle, and encourage the Government in its promised measure of next session, so that whatever other remedies might be proposed this should certainly be included as one of the most important provisions of their Bill. He had much pleasure in seconding the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House notes with satisfaction the successful working of the Local Option Laws in the Colonies, and approves the principle on which these laws are based — namely, that the people ought to possess the power through a vote of the local electors to protect themselves against the admitted evils of the liquor traffic."—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*)

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he should not have troubled the House on this subject had it not got beyond the academic stage by reason of the speech of the Prime Minister. The House was bound to give whatever heed it could to a matter of this sort before legislation was promoted, and he hoped, therefore, that they would deal with the matter in a practical manner. In that spirit he would like to define exactly what they were talking about. They were talking about the power of the people operating in regard to the liquor traffic, but they must remember that it was not merely that general principle. There was also the question of the degree to which it should operate, the manner in which it should operate, and the purpose for which it should operate. They ought to carry it a little further than the hon. mover and hon. seconder had done, and become a little more definite. He quite agreed that the time had come when the people must be allowed to participate more in this matter. He did not want to say anything against the magistrates, but he thought that to leave this matter entirely in the hands of the magistrates had become out of date. It was quite time that they took the people into partnership. But there were different degrees of partnership, and they had also to bear in mind that there ought to be certain limitations to the power of the people. He knew in this House it was not now quite the fashion to suggest that there should be any limitations, but as they were dealing with a practical matter they must consider what those limitations should be. There were three degrees of local option or popular control. In the first place, it was an obvious injustice that it should be possible to plank down a public-house and to damage, not merely the material value but the moral value, of the property immediately around. There should be some voice allowed to the people to say whether or not a public-house should be put in their midst, or whether any more houses should be licensed within a certain district. But the phrase "local option" carried with it another meaning, and it ought to be made quite clear. The power of absolute prohibition in wide areas would be most disastrous. Such a power ought not to be given to the people. If it were suggested it would block all possibility of wise legislation on this subject. He was old enough, unfortunately, to have seen a good many proposals, and if he might say so, the great enemies of temperance had been its friends. By coming for impossible things they had stopped the possible, the consequence being that they stood where they were because they had been impractical idealists. He wanted to avoid that in the future. The hon. mover had referred to the Bill of 1892, but that was very different from anything they had been talking about to-night. That Bill simply gave a choice of prohibition or nothing in large areas, and if they brought in that principle again they would ruin any proposal they might make, and put back the possibility of temperance reform. They had heard something of the Royal Commission. It always seemed to him ridiculous to choose a Commission of half a dozen men committed one way and half a dozen committed another and to leave them to fight it out. To use Plato's phrase, he thought that if they left the matter to sensible men they might possibly come to some solution. He was anxious that something should be done, and that it should not be stopped by their dragging in impossible proposals which would spoil the whole thing. The people would not have absolute prohibition, because they regarded it as a gross breach of personal liberty. The majority had no more right to tell the minority what they should not drink than to tell them what they should drink. The thing was an outrage, and the result would be that they would so arouse the feelings of the people that all hope of doing anything would be gone. He would suggest less extreme measures, and that they should follow a line of reform that was possible. He did not care for statistics, but he was quite certain that drunkenness had diminished in a striking degree since he was a young man. When he was a boy his tutor, with whom he lived, used to go to dine with the squire. He was a man who disliked drink, but he had to take him home every time he went there. He was not allowed to leave till he was drunk. It would have been considered a gross act of impoliteness to have left before getting into that condition. In the middle classes there had been an enormous change in the direction of temperance during the last twenty or thirty years, and amongst the working classes there had also been an enormous improvement. As an employer of labour he could remember when Monday morning was a recognised institution, and they expected about a third of the men to be away; but now Monday made not the slightest difference. Of all the changes that had occurred during his life, there was none so great or so hopeful as the increase of temperance among the masses. Therefore he wanted the House not to make fools of themselves by doing anything silly. He would remind them of Aristotle's saying that the best nation was the nation which did of its own accord that which the best laws would try to make it do. They had been discussing education, but what was the ultimate object of education? Its highest object was to make men and women, and not merely citizens. They would not make men and women of the best kind by removing every form of temptation. The mass of the people would say, "You educate us to make men of us, but in a matter of this sort you would treat us like children." While he recognised and rejoiced in the power of democracy, and had always in his way claimed to be a democrat, there was a danger in democracy if they were not careful. They might have the tyranny of a majority. The democracy wanted two things: the true power of a majority combined with the true liberty of the individual. Therefore if local option meant what it had meant before, if the chief idea was to give prohibition in large areas, he would vote against the proposal. If it meant giving a wise power to the masses of the people to take a proper participation in this matter, he would give it his support.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) wished most heartily that he could support the Motion, because all, he thought, were agreed as to the evils that these various proposals were suggested to meet. He quite approved of the hon. Member asking the House to consider the action of people in the colonies in respect of this matter, because they would best arrive at a proper opinion as to what was likely to be the result of any legislation they might pass if they took into account what had been the result of similar proposals when passed into law in our colonies. He differed from the hon. mover as regarded the results of the laws passed in the colonies. About ten years ago a Commission issued a report condemning the local option laws in Canada. He was travelling in Canada at the time this Royal Commission concluded its labours, and he met some of the members of the Commission in the town of Montreal. He was simply astounded on reading the evidence to find the unanimity of those who were appointed to carry out the local option laws of Canada in condemning their operation. They stated that these laws were a downright failure, and that the people who voted for local option did not assist the administrators of the law in carrying it out, and, indeed, were the very first to break the principles of the law. This Royal Commission carried their inquiry beyond Canada into the bordering states, and they found the same condition of things there. During a visit to the United States in 1891, he remembered seeing in the town of Lowell a number of houses with the shutters up and the doors open. These were public-houses closed according to the principle of local option by a vote of the borough council, but he found no difficulty in getting served with a drink, although when he went into one of these houses he did not see a barrel, a bottle, or a vessel of any kind. Where the drink with which he was served came from he did not know. A policeman explained to him that it was understood that the law was to be reversed by the next council, and that in the meantime breaches of it were winked at, and nobody was prosecuted. These houses were opened the next year and had been opened ever since. [An Hon. Member: "No."]. Well, he should like to hear proof to the contrary. He was again in Lowell in 1893, and he found all the houses in question were open. He went from Lowell to Salem and Lynn, in both of which places he saw the houses closed in like manner, those engaged in liquor traffic acting not as publicans but as dealers in a mercantile sort of way, and they had removed their business to Boston. As in the case of Lowell, he was told that the local authorities had closed the houses, but they were to be opened the next year. The following year he ascertained that that was the case, and they had remained open ever since, those who had taken their business to Boston having returned. How could they have uncontaminated zones in a country like this? Of course they might have them in Canada and the United States, where the different places were far removed from each other, but in this country the various communities were contiguous, and it was impossible. Local option in this country would introduce the same serious evil as he had found in Lowell and Salem. The desire to have a council favourable to this or that view of local option would govern all borough elections, and everything else would be as nothing compared to the amount of intrigue that would be introduced. He had a friend in Salem who owned about half the public-houses, and as soon as one council was elected his friend set to work to secure the return the next year of a council favourable to granting him his licences. That was the sort of thing which would be introduced into England. People strongly in favour of teetotalism would sacrifice every other local and Imperial interest to this. He would vote for the Motion before the House if he thought it would have the desired result, but he failed to see that local option had achieved that end elsewhere. The House was asked to consider what had taken place in our Colonies. He had in his mind what had taken place in Canada and in Massachusetts. His own experiences compelled him to believe that the operation of this law, which had been a failure where it had been tried, would prove a failure here also. Much as he desired to see a change, he could not vote for such a Motion. The only effective way to deal with this question was to rule public-houses from chimney top to basement by the most stringent laws, and to place in them men whose characters were beyond reproach. Only by a stringent licensing system, and not by local option, could such a change as he desired be carried out. Being strongly of opinion that the law must be made stronger somehow, he desired to suggest to the Government that before they tried the remedy now proposed they should send to the Colonies some trustworthy Commission to inquire into the operation of these laws. They had heard very general statements and statistics, but the statistics did not prove everything. He felt sure that if the Government would institute the inquiry he suggested, his own experience would be that of all who would carry into the investigation a free and open mind.

*Mr. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) said he had paid some attention to the operation of these laws in Canada and the United States, and he had visited some of the towns there. He had also had the pleasure of reading five volumes of the Report of the Canadian Commission which had been referred to. He desired to remind the hon. Member for North Kildare that since the Report of the Canadian Commission a *plébiscite* of the people of Canada had shown that the majority of them were in favour of the prohibition of the sale and of the manufacture and importation of alcohol. He thought that the people living under those laws were the best judges of their success. Reference had been made to Lowell, where, it was said, the public-houses after being closed by order of the borough council had been opened never to be closed again. That was hardly correct, for he knew that Lowell did again return to prohibition voluntarily in that zone. He admitted the difficulty of enforcing these laws when carried by a majority vote, and especially in towns in America; but the hon. Member for North Kildare did not tell the House that he would find a number of other laws on other subjects violated in America. The enforcement of most laws in the United States by the local authorities was very lax. It was very frequently merely a question of backsheesh to officials. Municipal government in America, speaking generally, was rotten and corrupt. [Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR : "Shame."] There was no shame about what he was saying. It was the simple, well-known truth.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR rose to order. He desired to ask the Speaker whether the hon. Member was in order in impugning the character of a whole nation and its Government in this manner.

***MR. SPEAKER** said that he had heard expressions very similar to those used by the hon. Member used in the House before on the same matter, and he did not think that he could rule them out of order.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): It is awfully bad taste, anyhow.

***MR. WHITTAKER** said that another reason why these laws were enforced with difficulty in America was that they were carried by a bare majority vote. He personally had always been in favour of a large majority vote for the purposes of carrying a law of this kind. The hon. Member for North Kildare had told them that they would be liable to town council intrigue, and the hon. Member's impression apparently was that the Resolution proposed to leave the matter to the town council. The proposal was to have a direct veto of the people, and what in the world the town council had to do with it he could not understand. The hon. Member was apparently talking about something which he had not taken the trouble to understand. His hon. friend the Member for Bolton had suggested that they should leave this matter to be decided by sensible men; but he noticed that his hon. friend had decided that sensible men would be those who represented his views. The hon. Member had also said that this veto would be a breach of liberty, and that they were proposing to treat alcohol as though it were a deadly poison. It was not a question whether alcohol was a deadly poison, but whether a public-house was to be opened at a street corner if the people in the vicinity thought it would be a nuisance. It would be the liberty of those people that would be infringed by the opening of such a place. A man might like bacon, but he had no right to keep his pigs so near a neighbour as to be a nuisance to that neighbour; if he could not get bacon in any other way he would have to go without it. There were different methods of local option. He thought the case in favour of the direct local veto option was unanswerable, but there should be a large majority. He estimated that about one in eight of the adult men of this country were abstainers. That meant they could only carry temperance legislation if they had with them a very large proportion of the non-abstaining element in the community. It meant that, to get a two-thirds majority anywhere for local veto, they would have to poll 45 per cent. of the non-abstaining adult voters in the community. That was a big thing to get. He believed they would get it in some small places; he doubted whether they would get it in any substantially large town. But he said that those who would use this power should have it and should not be deprived of it simply because others would not use it if they had it. What he felt was that, when they got it, the great liquor problem would still remain and would cry out for remedy in our populous districts and our towns, and therefore he wanted to make a plea for a broader view and a practical spirit. The Prime Minister had recently said that the Government wanted to get some general principle and to put the question on an intelligible, reasonable, and logical basis, and that they wanted a real settlement. The sound, general principle in this matter was to legislate for the nation as a whole as far as the general opinion of the nation would go, and then to give to localities the power to go farther when the public opinion there would permit them to do so. Local option should not be local veto only. It was because their temperance friends proposed in the Parliament of 1880 to put a limited interpretation on local option that the Resolutions then passed led to no legislation. Localities should have power to work out their own salvation. They should have local option for the licensing authority as to the hours of closing, Sunday closing, and closing on holidays, and earlier on Saturdays, which would be a great boon. Licensing benches should have greater powers as to barmaids being permitted in licensed houses.

There was also the question of having clear windows to public houses. Why should the public from the outside not be allowed to see what was going on inside? A reference had been made to the colonial laws. There was one law which interested him very much, and that was the Ordinance in operation in the Transvaal, which had been sanctioned by the Colonial Office. There was very little which the late Government did in South Africa of which he approved, but he did commend the Transvaal Ordinance to the consideration of His Majesty's Government. That Ordinance gave the local authority wide option as to the hours of sale, and limited the number of houses to one for every 250 of the adult population over sixteen years of age. In this country that would mean one for every 800 of the adult population. If a majority of the people in a town, village, or ward petitioned against the granting or renewal of a licence, the justices had no power to grant or renew it. The Ordinance also gave power of local veto and to adopt a system of management which would eliminate the stimulus of private profit from the retail trade. He was not in favour of municipalising the drink trade, but, speaking broadly, that Ordinance provided the logical basis the Prime Minister desired. The object of temperance reformers was to secure less drinking, and that would not be done by entrusting the sale of liquor to those whose interest it was to sell as much as they could. It would be wise that local option should include the power to eliminate private profit from the retail sale of liquor. The Ordinance in the Transvaal, sanctioned by the late Government, provided, on broad lines, the logical basis, the foundation of a real settlement, which he commended to the careful consideration of His Majesty's Government. The problem was undoubtedly difficult and complicated. The English-speaking peoples in the world were groping their way to a solution, and the best way to obtain that solution was by giving a wide option to localities to try various experiments. To carry successful temperance reforms they must enlist the support of all interested in the cause of progress. The powers against them were rich and influential. Total abstainers alone would not settle the question, and they were a minority of the nation. A narrow option would obtain fewer supporters than a wide one. They must carry the middle element in the community with them, the majority of whom were anxious that something should be done to grapple with a great national evil. It was no use a majority in the House of Commons forcing a measure through by sheer weight of numbers unless it had the general approval of the nation as a whole. One of the things which they ought to be proud of was the general stability of British legislation. One of their principal complaints against the late Government was that they forced legislation through against the opinion of the nation, and without considering the wishes or the feelings of the minority, with the inevitable result that they were now engaged in reversing some of those decisions. They wished to make this legislation broad, reasonable, and practical, and in that spirit and with that interpretation of local option he supported this Resolution, not as implying support for a limited proposal for local veto only, but as meaning the application of a broad principle of local elasticity, and local adaptability—a wide local option.

*Mr. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said that the previous speaker had not given the House any figures in favour of his views. Something more than generalities ought to be produced. It would be strange if one who, like himself, had spent a great part of his life dealing with crime and criminals, did not admit that much criminality was caused by drunkenness. He did not deny the evils caused by intemperance, but he certainly doubted whether the true cure for it was to be found in this proposal. He was convinced that those who spent time and energy in advocating local option were really, although against their will, hindering and not helping the temperance movement; and that those hon. Members who in 1888 were the cause of the Compensation Clauses being struck out of the Local Government Bill did a great disservice to the cause of temperance. The only good thing that had been done for the cause of temperance in this House during recent years was the passing of the Licensing Act of 1904 by the late Government. [Ministerial laughter.] Hon. Members opposite laughed at that, but perhaps they did not know quite so much about it as some other Members did. He spoke from his own knowledge and experience of the working of that Act. Let the House consider for a moment the figures in regard to the licences of which the renewal had been refused. The licences refused in 1903–4 in England and not granted on appeal averaged something over 200 each year, but he predicted that when the figures for 1905 were issued there would be a substantial increase. In his own county the justices refused more licences last year under the new Act than in ten years before, and he thought that in the current year the number would be still further increased. That Act had been often abused as a brewer's Act. It was the first Act which had assisted justices who were willing to reduce licences in this country. It was a genuine and honest measure, and those who said otherwise had not studied the figures and the facts of the case. He did not say that the Act did not want amendment. There was a possible chance of a great part of the compensation provided originally for the licensees going to the owners.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot see how the matter the hon. Member is now dealing with comes within the purview of the Motion before the House.

* Mr. CAVE said he accepted the ruling. He opposed the Resolution because he did not believe that prohibition, whether general or local, was a real workable remedy for the evil of intemperance. The Royal Commission which reported in 1899 reported against local option. Unless they carried the general sentiment of the people with them the measure would be attended with no success. It would lead to an increase in secret drinking and an increase in bogus clubs. The time of reaction would come, and in the end they would have reason to regret carrying the measure they advocated. If a general veto would be futile, a local veto would be more futile still, and would lead to vacillation of policy and a consequent uncertainty which would drive respectable men out of the trade. There were many respectable men who were now making a living out of the liquor traffic. He firmly believed that most publicans tried to do their best and to make their living in an honest and legal way, and did not deserve to be ruined by a veto of this kind. If drinking were prohibited in one district and permitted in another, people would go from the so-called uncontaminated zone into the contaminated zone, and there would be more drinking than ever. In Glasgow the public-houses were closed last Easter Monday.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): They do not keep Easter Monday in Scotland.

* Mr. CAVE would not, of course, dispute that point with the Prime Minister. Whatever the local holiday was, the result of closing the public-houses was that, as he was told, the tramcars ran in great numbers from the city of Glasgow into the adjoining territory called, he thought, Paisley and to Cambuslang. Thousands of people invaded these places and consumed all the alcoholic liquors, with the result that the arrests and convictions for drunkenness probably exceeded what would have been recorded in ordinary circumstances. On a fair day in Greenock last year there was a similar experience. The houses were closed and the whole of the male, and a great part of the female population, migrated to Gourock and had there as much liquor as they were able to consume. That was a practical instance, and such cases were not confined to Scotland. It showed that they could not by coercion of this kind impose the views of the majority on the minority. If they were going to make alcoholic drinking a crime, that was a different thing, but it was not a sensible thing to make it a crime in one place and a legal act in another. This kind of legislation always defeated itself. If compensation went with this policy it would be impracticable; if not it would be grossly

unjust to the men now engaged in the trade. They could not cure intemperance by injustice; and he did not believe the people of this country would allow them to inflict on a class now carrying on a legal trade such a loss as would be involved in the veto without compensation. That was a dilemma which ought to be met. They ought to know whether or not it was to be accompanied by compensation. It might be asked—if you do not approve of local option what is your remedy? The remedy had been already pointed out. By the spread of education, by improvement in the housing and social condition of the poorer classes, and by strengthening the laws against drunkenness the cause of temperance would be advanced. He did not believe in prohibiting drinking, but he did believe in prohibiting drunkenness. They ought also to strengthen the hands of the magistrates, who dealt with licensing matters. The Justices of this country endeavoured to perform their duty to the public. He knew they were abused by both sides—by those interested in the trade because they did not allow licences enough or because they refused licences, and by the temperance party because they granted too many licences. Anybody who had watched the efforts of the magistrates during the past few years would say that they were animated by a strong desire to do what was fair and right, and he believed it was along that line that one of the remedies for intemperance was to be found. The Prime Minister told a deputation the other day that the great thing was to search for a principle and to follow it out. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not conclude his search to-night and that he would not adopt once and for all the principle of this Resolution. This great question should not be decided on Party lines or in a hurry. It was a matter which had already been the subject of a number of Resolutions, a number of debates, and a number of abortive Bills in this House. He hoped they would not next year have another Bill on the same lines. There should be further inquiry, so that if possible any Bill proposed might meet with general assent. He was sure that a Bill framed on just lines would not meet with opposition on the Opposition side of the House.

MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston) said that the description which appeared in one of the London papers of the incident referred to by the hon. Member for Kingston was no doubt of a very striking character, but it had been repudiated, not merely by Glasgow, but by the Chief Constable of Paisley, who was the aggrieved party if anyone was. That official said that the description had been given evidently by some one who knew nothing whatever of the facts of the case. After a repudiation of that sort it was somewhat strange that the story should again be told in the House of Commons. The first hon. Member who spoke against the Resolution had described himself as being a very practical person, but he abstained from doing what any practical person would do—he refrained entirely from discussing the case on the ground of the practical experience of what had taken place elsewhere. The hon. Member had said he would give people the power of preventing a new public-house from being put in their midst because he had known the disastrous moral results that had followed. Surely, if disastrous moral results followed a new public-house, disastrous moral results might follow the continuance of an existing public-house, and if power was to be given in the one case it was not undesirable altogether in the other. It was also said that the power of refusing licences over a large area was one which ought not to belong to the landlord. It was said that it was a power which ought not to be given to any man. Had the hon. Member ever considered the cases where restrictions had been tried? The hon. Member for the Toxteth Division was the owner of the Toxteth area to which allusion had been made. The population there were under the prohibition laws. In his own prohibition area in the neighbourhood of London there was a population of something like 40,000. His experience had been exactly that of the hon. Member referred to. They had never had brought before them the smallest Resolution passed by the smallest committee in the smallest back parlour against their system of prohibition. Neither of them had ever had brought before him by any of the justices the slightest indication that there was any popular opinion against the system. In the case of his own property in the neighbourhood of Ilford the elected local authority had passed a Resolution every year urging the magistrates to refuse to grant any new licences in the neighbourhood. Allusion had been made to the allegation that proposals such as they were considering to-day would tend to corrupt the publicly elected authority. Surely it would have an exactly opposite effect. Municipal elections in Scotland, and he had no doubt it was the same in England, were to a considerable extent influenced by the liquor traffic because of the influence which the magistrates had with regard to the trade. If they took the question out of the hands of the magistrates and gave the people a direct veto to that extent they would diminish the interest of the electors in choosing men for the municipal council who would be affected by the trade on this question. An hon. Member had stated that comparatively few statistics had been given with regard to the experience of the colonies. The most reliable of all statistics, and those which were least susceptible of manipulation, were those which referred to the total consumption of alcohol throughout the community. Those figures had been given, and if they compared the returns of the consumption of liquor in local veto countries with the returns in countries where no such system prevailed, they would find that the consumption of liquor in local veto countries was less than half the consumption in the other countries. Moreover, they found that where this system had been tried it had been renewed and extended. Therefore, there must be a widespread belief that such enactments tended to the moral well-being of the people. It was because of their experience in Scotland of Sunday closing and early closing that sixty of the seventy-two Members were prepared to follow a policy of local option. They were opposed to the system of disinterested management, for its effect was to increase and not diminish the consumption of drink, not because the houses were worse managed, but because men drank on such premises who would hesitate to enter an ordinary public-house. They were not impracticable and unreasonable in this. They were following the example of our self-governing colonies, and they believed they were acting on practical and reasonable lines. Allusion had been made to the want of thoroughness in the carrying out of the experiments in America. Those who had studied the question did not admit that the prohibition law in the State of Maine had not been effective. After fifty years experience the people of the State of Maine were more unanimous in the belief in their prohibition law than they had ever been at any previous period of their history. He felt that they were discussing to-night the one question which the legislature could touch. It was one which most profoundly affected the moral well-being of the people. Sometimes when he heard debates in which mere Party issues were raised he was inclined to ask, What will it all mean a hundred years hence? They were discussing to-night a question which years would never make insignificant, and he believed that in years to come people would wonder that Parliament had so long tolerated the fearful ravages of intemperance without making more strenuous efforts to bring them to an end.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he had listened with the greatest interest to the speeches on both sides. He was sure there was no one in the House who did not feel the greatest interest in the question. They all desired, irrespective of Party, to attempt, at all events, to minimise the evils of intemperance which prevailed, not only in Scotland, but in every other civilised community. He said quite frankly that he differed from hon. Gentlemen opposite who had brought forward this Resolution as to the advisability, or expediency, or justice of the course suggested. He did not believe that by legislation they could make people abstainers. He was not prepared to set up temperance by coercion. If temperance was to be set up it must be not by coercion, but by suasion. He confessed he was unable to understand the logic which supported the particular principle advocated to-night. There were some who supported it on the ground that it was an extension of the principle of local government. That was the principle of devolution carried to an extreme. He was well aware that in this House as at present constituted any one who ventured to doubt the efficiency of devolution was in danger of being thought worthy of outer darkness, and that any one who ventured to doubt the capabilities of local authorities was likely to be classed with those who, as Sydney Smith had put it, presumed to speak disrespectfully of the Equator. Any measure of the kind advocated by this Resolution must lead to great bitterness in the administration of local affairs. How could people who regarded all consumption of alcohol as morally wrong consistently leave the practice as a mere matter of local option? He could not see how hon. Members could logically reconcile that with adhesion to the principle of local option. The proposition seemed to him to be logically absurd. As to the methods proposed in the Resolution, one would have thought that the supporters of the Motion would have dealt with the results of these methods in the colonies. He had failed to find that wealth of allusion to these points which one would naturally have expected. He only proposed to call attention to one particular colony. In New Zealand, under the law which has obtained since 1893, and amended in 1895, there was a three-fold option. There was one for continuance, and one for rejection. These were liable to be carried by a bare majority out of the total poll. The third option was total prohibition, which required the support of three-fifths of the total voters who went to the poll. The last poll for which statistics were at present available was held in November, 1902. In New Zealand the result of the new law had not been so wide-spreading as the hon. Member opposite would have the House believe. When they looked through rosy spectales they were apt not to see black spots, and the particular black spot in this case was that the number of districts which had gone for total prohibtion was not six, but only four, because two of the polls had been subsequently disallowed. But when they went a little further and inquired what were the results of the extension it was found that for the five years, 1899–1903, the convictions in New Zealand for drunkenness, excluding natives, had increased from 8·6 to 10·7, while the consumption of exciseable liquors had also increased from 8·49 to 10·35 gallons per head. The example of Queensland had been quoted, but the percentage of drunkenness per head during 1903–04 was higher than in any other Australian colony. He put these facts before the House, for he felt that this was not a subject on which one ought to take the rosy-spectacle point of view. They ought to act with the greatest caution, and he hoped the House would not be in a hurry to commit itself on the subject until it had had the fullest and amplest opportunity for inquiry.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know whether I should have thought it necessary to intervene in the debate if it had not been for the references that have been made by many speakers to some observations I addressed to a deputation a few days ago, comprising, as far as I could observe, nearly all the hon. Members who honour me with their support in this House. I have been taken to task to-day in the public newspapers by the right hon. Member for Oxford University in a lengthy and elaborate letter for having dared to say that we were all agreed upon this question. It is the last thing I should ever have thought of saying, that I could possibly be agreed with my right hon. friend who wrote that letter. I do not think there is any public question on which we have any agreement or sympathy at all. Of course, what I meant, and what I said, was that those who were present on that occasion were agreed, and I think that if so numerous a body of men are agreed, they constitute a very masterful force in determining the future course of this question. To-day we have heard all the old arguments—that we cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament, or that legislation will only drive people out of one place and make the condition of another place intolerable. Well, I answer to that, if it makes the other place intolerable you can adopt in the other place that which has had such beneficent effect in the first place. The hon. Member who has just sat down has proved to us most satisfactorily that you have only to adopt local veto or local option—the policy of giving the power into the hands of the people, and you have a large increase in the consumption of alcoholic liquors. Then why do not the brewers and distillers press for this policy? Then we had my hon. friend the Member for Bolton, who said he could not really support anything which interfered with the liberty of the individual in the matter of his daily life. I cannot help recalling a story that is told of Lord Melbourne when he once went to church. The energetic clergyman preached a strong sermon in denunciation of extravagant living—of gambling and of drinking, and, in fact, of all the ordinary practices of the general associates and society of Lord Melbourne himself. As he was walking away from the church some one who overtook him and saw that he was looking very glum, asked him what was the matter. "I have always," said he, "been a strong supporter of the Church and the national religion; but if the sacred edifices of that Church are to be used for the purpose of countenancing invasions of the sanctity of private life, I shall no longer have anything to do with them." But as has been said by many to-night, this is a very serious question. I trust it is true what has been pleaded by the other side, that it can be dealt with without any Party feeling. But unfortunately certain questions have associated themselves with certain Parties, and it is difficult to disentangle them when you wish. But for my part—remembering also that it is necessary for me to be always exceedingly discreet, as there may be more than a reasonable curiosity as to the future action of the Government, as to which to-night I need make no disclosure whatever—I have always been a supporter of the principle that in regard to this question of establishing new licences or retaining the old licences in a locality the people who ought to have the control and whose wishes in the matter ought to be final are those who live in the locality and who, therefore, have to enjoy the unspeakable blessing or have to endure the unspeakable mischief and nuisance—whichever way you put it — of such institutions as public-houses in their midst. But when you come to say how far you will give this power—whether it shall be by a simple majority on an open vote or whether it shall be given to an elected body—these are questions upon which there is much to be said, and they will have to be considered carefully by those who seek to deal with the subject. But the cardinal policy is that it is the men, women, and children who live in the locality who are principally interested, and who ought to have the governing voice in the matter and not superior persons in the locality or from other parts of the country, or Parliament, or committees, or commissions. It is the men, women, and children who live in the locality who are interested, and it is their interests solely that Parliament should have in view in dealing with the matter. I believe that the Resolution before the House embodies that principle; and on that ground I will gladly and willingly vote for it—as I have voted times out of number for similar Resolutions before — should my hon. friend go to a division.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was rather reluctant to intervene for even a few minutes in this debate, but he did so for two reasons. In the first place, he had introduced a Bill in support of this principle and therefore he ought to support the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman. And, in the second place, he was anxious to answer the speech of the hon. Member for North Kildare, who had given some interesting experiences of his in regard to prohibition in the United States of America. There was no doubt whatever that what the hon. Gentleman said was true. He himself was in the United States at the same time as the hon. Gentleman, and he could bear out the statement that they did come across here and there some districts where the principle of local veto did not seem to be quite satisfactory. He remembered being in the State of Maine more than twenty years ago, and he was struck by the fact that the law was not working satisfactorily then. It was quite easy to cite instances where laws of this kind had been unsuccessful, but that was no argument against the principle of the

Resolution. He had no doubt that if the principle became the law in this land it would be found that it would work satisfactorily in some districts, and not in others. The great point to be borne in mind was, who ought to be the authority in this matter? Ought the authority to be the magistrates, who were in no sense representatives of the people, and who were in many cases opposed to the popular view. He was not at all in favour of leaving this matter to be regulated by the local authority; he was in favour of the people at large having an opportunity of voting "aye" on "no" to the granting of licences, and that their opinion should prevail. He was sorry to hear the hon. Member for Spens Valley say that the whole of the municipalities of the United States were rotten and corrupt. He had been several times in the United States and had travelled through all the cities more than once, and whilst it it was undoubtedly true that municipal government there was not up-to-date, as in Great Britain, it was not true to say broadly that the municipal corporations in the United States were rotten. However, be that as it might, there was no proposal before the House to place on any municipality the power of vetoing the issue of licences; that was a question for the people alone. He himself had not the slightest doubt that the overwhelming opinion of the people of this country would be to act with fairness. He could not imagine for a single moment that any injustice would be done, or if injustice were done it would bear its own punishment. The principle of giving the people the power of vetoing the issue of licences existed not only in the State of Maine, but in a greater or less degree throughout the United States, and it had not been proved to be a failure in operation. Nor did he think that it had been proved that the result of local option in New Zealand had been to increase the consumption of alcoholic drinks or to lead to the increase of drunkenness. Apart altogether from the experience of Canada, Australia, and the United States, he contended that this was a matter over which the people as a whole should have complete control, and it was on that ground that he gave his hearty support to the Motion. And if it was embodied in a law he was sure it would be found that the best policy in the public interest was to trust the people.

*Mr. W. H. LEVER (Cheshire, Wirral) said that in the Division which he represented there was a village containing from 3,000 to 4,000 people. A request was made by certain of the villagers to the owners that a licence should be applied for. A poll was taken, when it was found that 80 per cent. of the villagers voted in favour of a licence. A licence was obtained, and the house was managed under Earl Grey's Trust. It was found from experience that although a majority of the villagers had voted in favour of the licence, they did not drink sufficient to pay interest on the capital, or the stipulated rent, and after carrying on for a couple of years Earl Grey's Trust gave up the house. Subsequently, under new management, the price of alcoholic liquors was raised to the scale charged in a first class hotel, while the price of temperance beverages was made as low as possible; and last week he was told that the consumption of alcoholic drinks had dropped 75 per cent., and the consumption of lighter refreshments had largely increased, and the public-house was now paying its way. He expressed the opinion that the effect of the Resolution, if carried into law, would be that in some districts the number of licences would be increased, and in others the number would be decreased. He had long been a supporter of the principle of local option, and he had great pleasure in supporting the Resolution.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said that notwithstanding the arguments which had been advanced during the debate, he was still in absolute ignorance of what was meant by local option, beyond the fact that they were to trust the people. They had not heard whether it was to trust the people in small or large areas, or over the whole kingdom. In Manitoba the choice was given the people of whether or not alcoholic liquor should be allowed to be sold, and after a very keen contest they decided against prohibition. On the other hand, in the adjoining territory prohibition was carried on a referendum. He was once in a prohibition country and found there was a great demand for spirits levels at 5d. per piece. These cheap articles consisted of a small glass tube with the end bound up with a postage stamp, and the contents were of course whiskey. In the constituency he represented there were large brewing and malting industries.

MR. LEIF JONES rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The House divided:—Ayes, 271; Noes, 44. (Division List No. 46.)]

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A.Acland(Christchurch)
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie, H. T.(Londonderry, N.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B.(Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Benn, JohnWilliams(Dev'np'rt
Benn, W(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H(Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Bolton, T.D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.

Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J (S.Pancras,W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J.(Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Ferens, T. R.
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fiennes, Hon, Eustace
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.

Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, JM(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)

Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Mara, James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, W.H.M.(Suffolk, Eye)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col.Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh,C'ntral)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards, T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Chas. E.(Manchester)
Scott, A.H.(Ashton-und.-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salsbury)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H(Somerset,E
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene(Clackmannan)
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, HenryJ.(York,W.R.)
Wilson, P.W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Leif Jones and Mr. Arthur Henderson.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.HnSirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Haddock, George R.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F.W.F(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Keswick, William
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Cave and Mr. G. A. Gibbs.

Resolved, That this House notes with satisfaction the successful working of the local option laws in the Colonies, and approves the principle on which these laws are based, namely, that the people ought to possess the power, through a vote of the local electors, to protect themselves against the admitted evils of the liquor traffic.

Adjourned at seventeen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 11th April, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

ESSEX AND SUFFOLK EQUITABLE INSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [LORDS].

Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

DOVER HARBOUR BOARD BILL [LORDS].

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Blackheath Staffordshire); and Rowley Regis; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Wigan, in favour; to lie upon the Table,

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Petition from Cathays, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from East Finsbury; and London; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; Aller (two); Alton Barnes and Alton Priors (two); Aveley; Appleton; Ardwick; Astley; Aston by Stone; Bedale (two); Beer Crocombe (two); Bethnal Green (two); Bilsdale Midcable; Blackburn (three); Blockley (two); Boconnoc; Bonchurch (two); Braddock; Bradford; Brightling; Broadhempston (two); Buckingham; Burnham Deepdale; Carleton Rode (two); Carlton le Moorland; Carmarthen; Chaddleworth; Chelsea; Claydon cum Akenham; Cold Kirby; Compton Martin (two); Cricklade; Cropredy; Croydon; Darlington (two); Darwen (three); Dickleburgh (two); Doddington (two); Ealing; East Ardsley (two); Eastmoors; Edmonton (two); Eridge Green; Farncombe; Filby (three); Finghall; Flordon; Frenchay; Fulmodeston (two); Gatcombe (two); Great and Little Henny (two); Great and Little Kimble (two); Great Glemham; Great Grimsby; Great Missenden (two); Grimston; Hadlow Down; Halliwell; Hanworth; Hapton (two); Heigham; Helmsley; Hereford (two); Highbury; High Ham (two); Hockham (two); Holborn; Horning (two); Horsford (two); Horton; Isleworth; Islington (two); King Cross; King's Lynn; Kirby; Bedon; Lancaster; Leeds; Leiston; Little Glemham (two); Leyland (three); Llandewi-Ystradenny (two); Llandrindod Wells (two); London; Longridge; Long Stratton (three); Lowick; Lytham; Maidstone (two); Merrington (two); Mexborough (two); Mile End; Milford; Mollington (two); Moulton; Mulbarton (three); Nechells; Neen; New Brentford; Newton Flotman; Northampton; Norton Bavant; Norwich (two); Nuneham Courtenay; Nunnington (two); Oake; Ockley (two); Openshaw; Ossett; Overchurch; Over Wyresdale; Pentney (two); Pockley; Preston Candover (two); Pulham; Reading; Reigate; Riveraulx; Rosley; St. Clether; St. Michael, Southampton; Salford (two); Saltley; Sapiston; Scole; Settle; Sevenoaks (two); Shirley; Shotley (two); South Heigham; Sparkford (two); Staines; Stanton Lacy; Stepney; Stoke Ash (two); Stowmarket; Sywell; Thurgoland (two); Timberland (two); Tongecum-Alkington; Tottenham; Tupsley (two); Twickenham; Wendover (two);

Westerdale (two); Westerham (two); Weston Turnville (two); Whorlton (two); Wiggington; Withyham; Witley; Wootton Bassett (two); Worth; Wrecclesham (two); Yalding (two); and, Yaxham: to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Crewkerne, for Prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-seventh Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS.

Copy presented, of Report of the Crofters' Commission for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large granted to William Jones, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNDERFED CHILDREN.

Copy presented, of Statement of Information collected by the Board of Education and the Foreign Office regarding methods adopted in great Continental and American cities for dealing with underfed children [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

Copy presented, of Return of Grants of Land in the East Africa Protectorate [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE (FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND BRITISH POSSESSIONS).

Copy presented, of Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom with Foreign Countries and British Possessions for 1905. Volume I. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3552 and 3553 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

LAND REGISTRY.

Return ordered, "showing the work done in the Land Registry in each of the years 1903, 1904, and 1905, respectively, under the various Acts hereinafter mentioned, namely:—

1. Under the Land Transfer Acts, 1875 and 1897—

(a) The number, value, and acreage (where known) of estates the titles to which were registered, on first registration, from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the numbers of estates registered with absolute, qualified, and possessory title, and good leaseholds; and also the number of estates registered under the Small Holdings Act, 1892;

(b) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905 (i.) by first registration, (ii.) by subdivision of estates already registered, and (iii.) by transfer from the 1862 register;

(c) The total number of separate titles which have been removed from the register on the 31st day of December, 1905.

2. Under the Land Registry Act, 1862:—

(a) The total number, value, and acreage (where known) of estates the titles to which were registered on first registration.

(b) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905, (i.) by first registration, and (ii.) by subdivision of estates already registered.

(c) The total number of separate titles which had been removed from the register on the 31st day of December, 1905, otherwise than by transfer to the 1875 register.

3. Under both the Acts of 1875 and 1862:—

(a) The total number of separate titles on the register on the 31st day of December, 1905.

(b) The total number of transactions registered from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905, showing the numbers of (i.) first registrations under the Acts of 1875 and 1897, (ii.) conveyances, transfers, and transmissions of land, (iii.) mortgages, charges, further charges, and transfers of mortgages and charges, (iv.) reconveyances of mortgages and cessation of charges, (v.) leases and surrenders of leases, (vi.) miscellaneous.

4. Under the Mortgage Debenture Acts, 1865 and 1870, and the Improvement of Land Act, 1864:—

A statement, so far as may be practicable, of the nature and amount of the work done under these Acts from the 1st day of January, 1902, to the 31st day of December, 1905.

5. Under the Land Charges Registration and Searches Act, 1888, and the Land Charges Act, 1900:—

The number of registrations, official searches, and ordinary searches made from the 1st day of January, 1903, to the 31st day of December, 1905.

6. Under the Middlesex Registry Act, 708, and the Land Registry (Middlesex Deeds) Act, 1891:—

The number of registrations and earches made from the 1st day of anuary, 1903, to the 31st day of Decem-er, 1905.

And showing the amount of fees ceived and the amount of salaries and xpenses in the Land Registry from the t day of April, 1903, to the 31st day of arch, 1905, distinguishing for the purses of Section 22 of the Land Transfer ct, 1897, the fees received and salaries and expenses paid under the Land Transfer Acts and the other Acts above referred to (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 315, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Rowlands.*)

DRUMDOE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON (INQUIRY).

Return ordered, "of the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into an alleged outrage at Drumdoe House, county Roscommon, on the night of the 11th day of July, 1905."—(*Mr. James O'Kelly.*)

STREET BETTING.

Address for "Return of (1) summary convictions for Street Betting in the Metropolitan Police District during the years 1903, 1904, and 1905, showing, as regards each police court district or petty sessional division, (a) the number of persons convicted, (b) the number of persons convicted more than once during those years, and the number of such convictions in each case, (c) the total fines imposed; (2) local Acts in England and Wales, since 1900, providing for fines exceeding £5 in the case of second or subsequent convictions for Street Betting."—(*Mr. Cave.*)

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890

Return ordered "as to the number of applications received by County Councils in England and Wales from District Councils to put in force Part III. of The Housing of Working Class Act, 1890, and as to the number of instances in which these applications have been granted, and in cases where they have been refused, the grounds for such refusal; also the number of cases in which resolutions by Parish Councils, under section 6 of The Housing of Working Classes Act, 1900, have been reported to the County Councils, and as to the action taken upon such resolutions."—(*Mr. Brodie.*)

POST OFFICE (WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY)

Copy ordered, "of Heads of Agreements between the Postmaster-General and Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company, Limited, and the Marconi International Marine Communication Company, Limted, dated the 11th day of

August, 1904, with reference to wireless telegraphy."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 123.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Customs Officials and Trades Association.

MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the office inspector of the Customs Department, London, refuses to have members of the Committee of the Customs Assistants Association in his office, and that the junior London inspector openly advises young officers not to join the association; and whether any steps will be taken to prevent any further pressure of this character being used by such inspector.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I can find no trace of any refusal by the office inspector of the Customs Outdoor Department, London, to assign members of the committee of the Customs Assistants Association to places in his office. Nor can I discover any case of the junior London inspector either openly or privately advising young officers not to join the association. I should be glad if the hon. Member could inform me as to any specific instance on which his Question is based.

Expenditure on Naval Education.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the gross expenditure on naval education and training, specifying how much has been spent under Vote 10, Naval Works Loan Acts, and other Votes in the preparation of ships and colleges in each of the financial years 1901 to 1906, inclusive, with the Estimate for 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The particulars asked for in this Question, which it is understood relates to Osborne and Dartmouth Royal and Naval Colleges (including attached tenders) and the Royal Naval Engineering College, Devonport, are given in the subjoined statement:—

Year.	Gross Expenditure.	Expenditure on preparation of Colleges (included in Gross Expenditure) under—		
		Vote 10.	Naval Works Act.	Other Votes
	£	£	£	£
1901–2 - - - -	110,579	1,238	44,417	—
1902–3 - - - -	128,107	810	60,613	—
1903–4 - - - -	259,966	101,848	61,905	12,913
1904–5 - - - -	253,306	55,835	58,279	17,669
1905–6 (estimated) - -	219,413	9,280	63,323	5,918
1906–7 (estimated) - -	205,692	13,000	43,115	2,000

French Polishing in Devonport Dockyard.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the bulk of the French polishing in the Devonport dockyard is now done by women, some being married and having husbands earning good wages; what saving has been effected by the substitution of female for male labour in this case; and whether this class of work, outside the Royal dockyards, is usually done by men.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Women are employed to do the portion of the polishing work which is carried out in the shops. Of the six at present engaged, five are married, and the average earnings of their husbands are 15s. 3d. a week. The saving effected by the substitution of female for male labour in this case is £235 a year. The class of work on which these women are employed is that usually carried out by female labour in the private trade.

Upholstering Work done by Women in Royal Dockyards.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that since March, 1905, women have been appointed to do the upholstering work formerly done by men; whether he can state the amount of saving effected by this arrangement; and whether it is usual in this industry, outside the Royal dockyards, to give to women such heavy upholstery work as they are called upon to do for the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Women have been employed to do the lighter upholstering work at Devonport since March, 1905. This has resulted in a saving of approximately £300 per annum. The work done by these women is lighter than would be required of them in the private trade, men upholsterers being employed to do all heavy work, such as stuffing couches, chairs, mattresses, etc., and cutting out and nailing the skins.

Irish Mail Contracts—Uniform of Drivers.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General why mail-car contractors in Ireland are compelled to provide uniforms at their own expense, seeing that all other postal employees are supplied with uniforms free of cost.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Mail car drivers in Ireland, as in England, are employed by contractors, not by the Post Office. These contractors, in tendering for the service, undertake to supply uniform to the driver; and that condition is taken into account in the amount of the tenders.

Transfer of Employees from Chatham Dockyard—Expenses of Removal.

Mr. E. H. LAMB (Rochester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will cause the expenses of removal to be defrayed by the Admiralty for the 225 men who are at present employed at Chatham Dockyard, and for whom employment is now contemplated in other yards; and whether some guarantee can be given to the men in question as to the duration of their new employment.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The question of affecting the removal of these men is at present under consideration, with the view of minimising any charges that might fall on them. It is not customary to give any guarantee as to the duration of employment to any of the men in His Majesty's dockyards.

Construction of Dublin College of Science.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many men are employed at present in the construction of the College of Science, Dublin; and whether it is intended to use Irish slates and materials in the building.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The number of men actually employed on Friday, 6th instant, in the construction of the College of Science in Dublin was thirty-three, in addition to nineteen carters, while the average number of men employed in the last three weeks was forty-three and eighteen carters. As regards the inquiry in the latter part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to a similar Question on the 2nd instant.†

Irish Board of Lights.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a measure to reform and re-organise the Irish Board of Lights, and to grant more liberal terms to its employees.

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† See col. 156.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary has asked me to reply to this Question. His Majesty's Government are not at the present moment prepared to undertake such a measure.

Labourers' Cottages at Ballygawley, Tyrone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the result of the Inquiry held by the Local Government Board in regard to a scheme for labourers' cottages at Ballygawley, county Tyrone.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Ballygawley is the name of an electoral division and dispensary district in the Clogher rural district, where, after due inquiry under Section 4 of the Act of 1891, the inspector of the Local Government Board recently reported that the rural district council had made default in making an improvement scheme. Thirteen labourers, on whose behalf representations had been made, attended the inquiry, and the inspector reported in favour of nine of these. The council have adopted a Report of a committee of their body objecting to the inspector's Report. The further action to be taken in the matter is at present under consideration of the Local Government Board.

Appointment of Assistant Land Commissioners.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of years service as Assistant Land Commissioners of each of the five gentlemen who have now been replaced by others in the appointments just sanctioned.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The number of years service of the gentlemen named as temporary Assistant Commissioners was as follows: Mr. Donovan, nine years; Mr. Grierson, eight years; Mr. Esmonde, six years; Mr. Croasdaile, six years; Mr. Clarke, six years.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether on the Magheradown estate, county Cavan, the Commissioners have sanctioned the advances and have vested the holdings in the tenants; if so, were the conditions as arranged by Captain Sankey, the vendor, carried out of reinstating the evicted tenants, and, if they have not been so carried out, will he explain why this has not been done; and will the Estates Commissioners compel Captain Sankey to compensate the evicted tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the advances applied for on the sale of the estate in question have not yet been sanctioned. The evicted tenants on this estate have not been reinstated. Their former holdings are in the occupation of other tenants, and there is no untenanted land on the estate. The Commissioners are satisfied that the vendor carried out the conditions on which the terms of sale were arranged, and they have no power to compel the vendor to compensate evicted tenants.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland with reference to the land case of the Marquess of Downshire, landlord, and Andrew T. Blaine, tenant, Record No. 5681, whether he is aware that at the inspection of the holding the Head Commissioner said, in the presence of the landlord's representative, that the tenant was not allowed sufficient reduction on account of drains and flooded ground; and whether he can explain why, under these circumstances, the rent was confirmed.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commissioner that this Question refers to the judicial decision of the Land Commission Appeal Court in a case fully heard and decided under the Land Acts, and they are not prepared to discuss or explain their judicial decisions in reply to Questions in Parliament.

Technical Knowledge for Position of Hackney-Carriage Inspector at Dublin.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a communication from the Coachbuilders' Society of Dublin asking that a practical coachbuilder should be appointed to the position of hackney-carriage inspector for that city; whether he is aware that the claim of the Coachmakers' Society for this position has been endorsed by several of the Irish trade congresses; and whether, in view of the practical knowledge possessed of the duties by coachmakers, he will see that such a person is appointed when the next vacancy arises.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received the communication referred to. I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police that the duties discharged by the Inspector of Police in charge of the hackney-carriage department are of a varied character, requiring considerable police experience and knowledge of the hackney-carriage laws and regulations. The minor portion of his duty, which relates to the inspection of vehicles, can be adequately discharged without a practical knowledge of coach-building.

Account of Late Staff Officer Deegan, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the alleged falsifications which took place in the books of the late Staff Officer Deegan, in the Royal Irish Constabulary Office, Dublin Castle, if he will say (1) whether the falsifications alleged to have been made between the months of September and December, 1903, would have been discovered in the life-time of the deceased if the bank book had been lodged to be made up between these dates; (2) whether seeing that two examinations of deceased's books were admittedly made within the above period, should not the bank book have been made up for the purpose of each of these examinations, and, if so (3) why was not the bank book lodged, and who was responsible for the non-lodgment until immediately after the deceased's death, when the deceased could not answer the alleged charge of falsification; and (4) should not there have been monthly audits or examinations of deceased's books, at which the bank book made up to date should have been produced to the auditor or examiner.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) (1) The falsity of the entries made by the deceased staff officer in his bank book, between September and December, 1903, would have been discovered in his lifetime if he had lodged the book in the bank, during the period mentioned, to be written up there, as it was his duty to do. (2) When the accounts of the deceased were examined within this period, the deceased produced his bank book apparently written up, but it was only after his death that it was discovered that the entries in the book had not been made at the bank. (3) The lodgment of the book in the bank was the duty of the deceased himself, and he concealed his non-performance thereof by the entries therein which purported to have been made at the bank. (4) The books and monthly accounts of deceased were examined during the period in question, and the falsified bank book was produced by him to the examiner on each occasion.

Purchase of Estates in County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the names, and the extent in statute acres, of the estates purchased by the Congested Districts Board in the county Mayo within the last ten years; whether any of these estates are still in the hands of the Board, and, if so, what are the names, and the extent in statute acres, of such estates; how long have they been in the hands of the Board; and can he give the cause in the case of each estate of their non distribution amongst the neighbouring tenants who live on uneconomic holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I will obtain and forward to the hon. Member a statement giving the information for which he asks. It will, however, take some little time to prepare it.

Irish Land Purchase Fund.

LORD CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any moneys have been placed to the credit of the capital account of the Irish Land Purchase Fund since January 31st; what is their total amount; and how much thereof has been assigned to the capital account of the Irish Land Purchase Aid Fund for the percentage payable under Section 47 of The Irish Land Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The following sums have been placed to the credit of the Irish Land Purchase Fund since the January 31st last, viz.:—

	For Advances.	For Land Purchase Aid Fund.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
On February 26th - -	910,750 0 0	89,250 0 0
On April 6th - - -	920,291 13 4	Nil
Total - -	1,831,041 13 4	89,250 0 0

Purchase for Irish Lands.

MR. R. PEARCE (Staffordshire, Leek): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the prospect of Canadian store cattle being admitted to the United Kingdom alive, if free from disease, and the threatened injury to the Irish cattle trade and consequent damage to the Irish tenantry and non-payment of the rentals, the Government will refuse to provide any more money for the purchase of land under the Irish Land Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) No, Sir; the Government propose to continue to provide money for the purchase of Land under the Act of 1903.

Sale of Kerry Estates.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state, in connection with the sale of land in the county of Kerry by landlords, either to the tenants direct, the Estates Commissioners, and the Congested District Board, under the Purchase Act of 1903, the name of the landlord or estate, the average of estate, the valuation of the estate, the rental of the estate, the amount of purchase money, the amount of bonus, the date when agreements were lodged, and the date when sale was provisionally sanctioned or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that their Annual Report and Monthly Returns, now in course of preparation, will give ample information by counties as to all holdings sold under the Act of 1903. I am forwarding to the hon. Member a Return giving particulars of the purchases made by the Congested Districts Board in county Kerry.

Sick Pay of Labourers Employed by Drogheda Corporation.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the auditor to the Local Government Board has given notice to the Drogheda Corporation that he will not allow them to make any allowance, in the shape of pay, to any of the labourers in their employment who may be temporarily absent through sickness; will he say by what authority the auditor has made such a restriction; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Inquiries are being made in this matter; but I have as yet no information to give the hon. Member. The Local Government Board inform me that the question of paying the employees of local authorities during illness frequently arises, and that, while they have laid down no definite ruling, it is customary for them to point out that under ordinary circumstances workmen are generally regarded as receiving a day's wages for a day's work done, and are therefore in a different position from officers who hold specific appointments during the pleasure of the local authority. In some cases the Board realise that it might be reasonable to allow wages during absences on account of sickness to certain classes of workmen who are regular employees of the local authority; but they cannot quote any statutory authority for making such payments.

Public Education in the Gold Coast Colony.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the proportion borne by the amount devoted to education in the Gold Coast Colony to the public revenue of the same; whether out of a population of 2,500,000 people there were until recently only two schools for girls, and that one of these have been permanently closed since the beginning of the year; whether he can assign any reason for this state of affairs; whether he can state what new public work have been undertaken in the Colony since the recent levy; and whether he is aware that all courts of justice in Northern Nigeria and Ashantee are closed to practising barristers, with the result that complaints amongst the natives are numerous as to alleged cases of miscarriage of justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) According to the Estimates for 1906, £10,920 is allotted to education out of a total revenue estimated at £697,000. In addition to the two Government girls' schools, there are seven mission girls' schools and seventy-six mixed schools. The reasons given for the closing of one of the Government girls' schools at Cape Coast were that there were sufficient other girls' schools at Cape Coast, that the attendance at the Government school was small and the teaching was unsatisfactory, and that the space was required for an extension of the boys' school. Since the Gold Coast Loan of 1902 was issued the railway from Sekondi has been completed to Kumasi, harbour works are being undertaken at Accra, and a survey is being made for a railway from Accra. Barristers are not allowed to practice in native courts in Northern Nigeria, nor in civil causes between illiterates in other courts in Northern Nigeria and Ashanti except in special circumstances, and in certain other cases the employment of a barrister is subject to the approval of the court. The rules to this effect were made for the protection of the natives, and I have received no complaints that miscarriages of justice have occurred in consequence of them.

West African Medical Service and Coloured Practitioners.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether coloured medical men of African origin or descent are excluded from the West African medical service; and, if so, can he state upon what grounds.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Coloured medical men of African origin or descent are ineligible for the West African medical staff, but are eligible for certain other public appointments in the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Lagos. The West African medical staff is constituted principally for the purpose of safeguarding the health of the European officials of the Colonial Governments; and West African native medical officers would not, as a rule, command the confidence of these Europeans.

Pay, etc., for Royal Engineers engaged on Ordnance Survey.

MR. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, what is the maximum working pay for a sergeant or sapper of the Royal Engineers employed on the Ordnance Survey, together with his military pay and perquisites; whether they get paid out of the Ordnance Survey grant or out of the Army Estimates; and whether he is aware that the civilian employees are sometimes reduced or checked in their pay and discharged without gratuity or pension after long service.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The non-commissioned officers and sappers employed on the Ordnance Survey receive working pay and lodging allowance from the Survey Vote and military pay from the Army Votes. The rates of working pay vary from 6d. to the maximum of 4s. a day. When quarters and fuel cannot be provided the money allowances are:—Lodging Allowance. For warrant officers, married or unmarried, 1s. 6d. per diem. For staff sergeant, married or unmarried, 1s. 4d. per diem. For company sergeant-majors, married, 1s. per diem; unmarried 9d. per diem. For sergeants, corporals, sappers, and buglers, on the married roll, 10d. per diem. For sergeants, corporals, sappers, and buglers, not on the married roll, 4d. per diem. The fuel allowance is issued at winter or summer rates, and varies, according to rank, from 3d. to 9d. a day. The daily rates of military pay are as follows: — Sergeant-major, 6s.;

quartermaster-sergeant, 4s. 6d.; company sergeant-major, 3s. 9d.; sergeant, 3s. 3d.; corporals, 2s. 6d.; second corporals, 2s. 2d.; sappers and buglers, 1s. 1½d. Checks of pay for bad work or misconduct are imposed both on the military and civil employes. The latter are not discharged without gratuity or pension after long service, except for misconduct.

Ordnance Survey Department.

MR. FIELD: To ask the hon Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, approaching the end of each financial year, the employes in the Ordnance Survey Office only are put on overtime; whether this is done in order that a certain ratio of work should be shown, or whether it is to absorb surplus money; and whether he can state what amount of the grant has been expended upon office buildings, stationery, and similar charges.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It is sometimes necessary to resort to overtime in the publication branch of the Ordnance Survey in order to keep pace with the work and to prevent its accumulation when pressure arises, but not for the purpose of showing a certain ratio of work or of absorbing surplus money towards the close of the financial year. The expenditure from the Survey Vote in current repairs of office buildings, including water, gas, and electric light fittings, heating apparatus, etc., amounts to between £400 and £500 a year. Stationery and printing are not charged to the Survey Vote, but are supplied by the Stationery Office. The aggregate cost in 1904–5 was £2,743.

MR. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state how many men are in the field section with from fourteen to thirty-three years' service, who are classed as temporary civil assistants and also chainmen with no prospect of a pension, and little chance of promotion; whether he can state how many civilians in this department are civil assistants eligible for pensions; and how many of this class will be in receipt of the pension on reaching the age limit.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) There are six civil assistants, 200 temporary civil assistants, and sixteen chainmen, with from fourteen to thirty-three years service, employed on the field duties of the Ordnance Survey. The six civil assistants are eligible for pensions on reaching the age limit. The temporary civil assistants can obtain pensions only in the event of their being appointed to one of the posts which carry pensionable rights.

School Inspectors in Cardiff District.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the fact that all His Majesty's inspectors of schools in the Cardiff district are monoglot Englishmen; and whether, in view of the fact that the Welsh language is a subject of instruction in all the schools of Cardiff, he can arrange for a Welsh-speaking inspector, preferably a Welshman, to be located in that district.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am aware that His Majesty's inspector (there is only one) for the Cardiff district does not speak Welsh, but I believe that he is the only His Majesty's inspector in Wales who does not. Every effort is made by the Board to arrange that Welsh schools are inspected by Welsh-speaking inspectors. There are Welsh-speaking inspectors in all the neighbouring districts, one of them living close to Cardiff, who are available whenever required in the Cardiff district. I do not think, therefore, that any inconvenience can arise.

Education Bill—School Hours.

MR. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether it is proposed in the Education Bill that the term school hours, as applied to public elementary schools, shall mean only the hours between 9.45 a.m. and 4 p.m., during which hours alone attendance will be compulsory; if so, whether the local education authorities will be empowered by law, and have the sanction of the Board of Education, in addition to providing secular instruction during the school hours from 9.45 a.m. to 4 p.m. to provide religious instruction, in accordance with a syllabus approved by the Board of Education and consonant with the Cowper-Temple clause, out of school hours between 9 a.m. and 9.40 a.m.;

and whether, if this is the case, the local education authorities will have the power to engage the teachers in public elementary schools, at the public expense for the purpose of giving such religious instruction in addition to the secular instruction to be given in the school hours from 9.45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask the President of the Board of Education how often it will be permissible to revise the proposed religious census of parents by which, on the demand of at least 80 per cent., denominational teaching will be permitted in populous districts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I must refer the hon. Members to the terms of the Bill itself, which is now available for Members. It does not seem to me a convenient practice to attempt to deal by means of Question and Answer with details of an important measure which is awaiting the consideration of the House. The various discussions on the Bill that must take place in the House will offer ample opportunity for its elucidation.

Head Postmastership.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General in reference to a resolution adopted at the recent conference of Irish postal clerks, held in Dublin, as to the appointment to vacant postmasterships in Ireland of the establishment serving in England, what is the number of head postmasterships in England, including Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, with salaries not exceeding £100, £200, £300 and £400, in excess of £400 and not exceeding £800 and over £800 per year; and what was the average number of vacancies in these positions arising in each country for the three years ending the 1st January last.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I cannot supply the hon. Member with an answer to his Question; to work out the figures would involve considerable labour.

Belfast Post Office Staff.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General, with reference to the recent selections upon the staff of the telegraph branch of the Belfast Post Office to fill the vacant positions of acting or relieving postmasters, whether written application was made by those appointed in respect of these vacancies; if so, what was the respective dates of such applications, to whom addressed, and with whom did the confirmation of these selections finally rest; whether at the time they were confirmed had applications been received from any other member of either the telegraph or postal sections; if so, from how many; and, if not, can any reason be assigned for none applying; and if it be the practice to invite applications for such vacancies, what was the date upon which this practice was initiated; was it coincident with these vacancies arising; and upon whose authority was the former system of inviting applications for vacancies superseded; and, as there were only three vacancies and three candidates, can he state how the most suitable of eligible officers came to be determined.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I do not see my way to give the hon. Member the detailed information he asks for.

Eye (Suffolk) Election—Post Office and Election Pamphlets.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, during the recent bye-election in the Eye Division of Suffolk, the post office at Knoddishall was used for the purpose of the distribution of political literature in support of the ministerial candidate; whether leaflets distributed were stamped with the official post-mark of the office; and, if so, whether this is in accordance with the Post Office Regulations.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am making inquiry on this subject, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Committal of Children to Industrial Schools.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the committal of the Hyndham children to the Strabane Industrial School by the justices of Cushendall, county Antrim, was a judicial proceeding by order; if so, were the children released by the Crown on the ground that no evidence existed to warrant the committal; since what date has the

Crown undertaken to examine evidence in the case of committals; does such examination extend to criminal convictions, and, if a distinction exists, upon what principle is it based; was a certiorari applied for to quash the order of the Cushendall justices; if not, what official decided that there was no evidence on which the justices could legally act; how is the jurisdiction to examine into the evidence before justices derived; and were written depositions taken in the present case.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) These children were committed to Strabane Industrial School under the provisions of the 11th section of the Industrial Schools Act, 1868, on the grounds that they were found wandering and that they were not under proper guardianship. Written depositions were taken and a regular order of committal was made by the Cushendall justices. A certioriari was not applied for to quash the order of the justices. The children were discharged by the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant under the powers conferred on him by the 33rd section of the Act.

The Tweed Act—Complaints by Anglers.

MR. E. P. TENNANT (Salisbury): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the complaints amongst anglers in the upper waters of the Tweed regarding the operation of the Tweed Acts; and, if so, whether he will, in due course, consider the advisability of amending these Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am aware of these complaints, and shall be glad to consider in due course the question of legislation.

Peeblesshire County Council Clerk as Election Agent.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that dissatisfaction prevails amongst the Liberal ratepayers of Peeblesshire, who are in a majority, at the action of the clerk of the County Council in appearing in the registration courts and at election times as paid Conservative agent; and, if so, whether he possesses statutory power to prohibit a practice which is peculiar to that county, and which is persisted in in spite of continued protest.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am aware of this dissatisfaction, which seems on general grounds to be reasonable, and, I understand, has in its support the almost unanimous practice of the county councils of Scotland. But the Secretary for Scotland has no statutory powers in the matter.

Extension of Workmen's Compensation Act to Channel Islands.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that Messrs. Mowlem and Company, of Westminster, supply Government and municipal contracts from their granite quarries in Guernsey, Channel Islands, where a workman, named Lemaitre, was killed last month; and whether, as his widow had no claim to compensation under any existing law, he will extend the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Bill so as to make it apply to workmen employed in the Channel Islands who are engaged in carrying out British contracts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The case mentioned has not come before me. I will consider the hon. Member's suggestion, but must first consult the authorities of the islands.

Collection of King's Taxes.

MR. NOLAN: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether complaints have been made as to the employment of underpaid youths by certain district collectors to perform the duty of calling upon the public for taxes; and, if so, whether it could be arranged that firms in large industrial centres should pay direct to the chief collector of Inland Revenue the taxes under Schedules A, B, C, D, and E.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The Board of Inland Revenue have heard of no complaint of the kind, and have no knowledge of any such practice, which would be quite contrary to the instructions issued to collectors of taxes.

Grants for Scottish Education.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the

Exchequer whether, in view of the grant proposed under the Education Bill for dealing with voluntary schools in England, it is intended to provide an equivalent grant for Scottish education.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) As the financial arrangements under the Education Bill will not come into force during the present financial year, it would be premature to come to any decision on the question raised by my hon. friend.

Pay of Labourers in Irish Branch Army Ordnance Department.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst the labourers employed in the Army Ordnance Department in Ireland, on account of the rate of wages earned by them and owing to dismissals of civilians from employment; and whether he will explain why six notices of discharge were served recently at Island Bridge depot.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The question of the rate of pay for labourers is now the subject of inquiry between the War Office and the General Officer Commanding in Chief in Ireland. The dismissals referred to are in consequence of reduction of civilian establishments.

Exercise of Horses for the Curragh Camp—Danger to Public.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that it is the custom for soldiers stationed at the Curragh Camp, Kildare, to exercise three horses abreast on the public roads, to the danger of pedestrians; whether he is aware that the rural district council have passed a resolution condemning the practice, and have written a remonstrance on the matter to the Assistant Adjutant General, commanding the district without redress; and whether he will make inquiry into the complaint and have an immediate remedy applied.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These matters must necessarily rest with the local military authorities, with whose discretion I am not prepared to interfere.

Tidworth Barrack Scheme.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the whole of the money voted for the Tidworth Barrack scheme has been expended; if not, why a hospital, for which plans have been prepared for some months, has not been built in order to obviate the inconvenience and suffering of moving sick soldiers four miles to Bulford; and whether any church or chapel for the 3,000 troops stationed at Tidworth is immediately contemplated, as none exists.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The allocation of funds for the provision of a hospital at Tidworth is at present receiving careful consideration. The sick are transferred to the military hospital at Bulford, and no complaints of inconvenience or suffering have been received. It is not proposed at present to construct a church or chapel for the troops at Tidworth.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Retired Officers.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Article 606, Pay Warrant, which states that under special circumstances determined by the Secretary of State for War the retired pay of an officer may be suspended or withheld, enables a Secretary of State to prevent criticisms adverse to the Army Board or to individual members; whether he is aware that this regulation places retired officers in a less secure position than officers on the active list, who can claim a trial by court-martial; and whether he will undertake not to interfere in any way with the free expression of opinions by retired officers.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The exercise of the power referred to in Article 606 of the Pay Warrant does not place retired officers in a disadvantageous position, as compared with officers on the active list, in the manner suggested, as the latter cannot claim a trial by court-martial. It has not been customary to interfere unreasonably with the expressions of opinion of retired officers, and I am not prepared to give the undertaking suggested in the Question.

MR. BELLAIRS: May I ask my right hon. friend what redress of any kind retired officers have?

*MR. HALDANE: I am not aware that any unreasonable interference has occurred. It is only on grave grounds that interference takes place.

COLONEL HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): May I ask whether any reason exists for subjecting retired officers of the Army to disciplinary provisions which do not apply to his Majesty's Civil servants?

*MR. HALDANE: I am not aware of any concrete case of the kind suggested, but it is right that in such cases there should be some control. After all, an officer of the Army, even if he is on the retired list, is in a responsible position, and more importance is attached abroad to what he says than to what a civilian says.

COLONEL HERBERT: Would not this question arise on the discussion of the Estimates?

*MR. HALDANE: If I have done anything which my hon. friend thinks is unreasonable it is quite competent for him to raise this Question upon the salary of the Secretary of State for War.

Military Station at Londonderry.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why was the work of completing the contract of building the military station, etc., at Ebrington, Londonderry, suspended; what amount of money is yet to be expended; and whether he will now take steps to have the work proceeded with.

*MR. HALDANE: The buildings at Londonderry have been completed and no work is now in hand. There is no money yet to be expended. It is not therefore understood to what the hon. Member alludes.

Seaforth Highlanders in Port George.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the members of the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia) who reside in the Island of Lewis recently received notice summoning them to Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, and directing them to travel by the mail steamer leaving Stornoway on the night of Monday as there was no special boat this year, and stating that all would certainly not be allowed to travel by the mail steamer leaving Stornoway on Tuesday night, and that those who did not travel on Monday and found themselves crowded out of Tuesday's mail boat could not arrive in time for the assembly, and would render themselves liable to punishment; and, seeing that there are about 700 of the Militia in the island, and the steamer will only accommodate 250 men, will he explain by whose authority the notice was issued; and why the men were threatened with punishment if they did not arrive in time.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the members of the Ross-shire Militia, 3rd Seaforth Highlanders, were recently summoned to attend at Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, with the result that 400 men gathered into Stornoway from all parts of the island on Monday the 2nd instant for the purpose of proceeding that night to Fort George; whether he is aware that, as the steamer would only accommodate 250 men, the remainder, many of whom had travelled long distances to the town, had the greatest difficulty in finding accommodation for the night; and will he state who is responsible for having failed to make suitable arrangements, and in what way the men have been compensated for their outlays.

I beg further to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia), which is almost entirely composed of Lewis men, were summoned to Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, and that there are about 700 of the Militia in the island, he will explain why no special boat was chartered for their conveyance, seeing that the mail steamer would only accommodate 250 men, and that it was, therefore, impossible for all the men to reach Fort George by the date specified.

MR. HALDANE: There is no information in the War Office in regard to the matters mentioned in these three Questions, but reference has been made to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in Scotland.

MR. WEIR: This is a matter of serious and urgent importance. There are 750 of these Seaforth Highlanders at Lewis. I should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman might have gone to the expense of a sixpenny telegram to have made the inquiries. In consequence of the very unsatisfactory nature of the Answer I shall raise this Question on the Motion for the Adjournment.

Plant and Machinery at Sparkbrook Factory.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, the amount of money expended on plant and machinery in the Sparkbrook factory during the last ten years; and whether he will state the sum to be paid for the same by the purchasing syndicate.

MR. HALDANE: The total amount spent on plant and machinery in the last ten years was about £37,000. The sum to be paid for the same by the purchasing factory cannot, as I have already explained, be at present disclosed.

Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what time will be specified in the Regulations under the Chinese Ordinance which must elapse before the 16,000 coolies not yet arrived in the Transvaal may apply for repatriation after coming to the mines.

*THE UNDER - SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): This is one of the points of detail as to which information cannot be given until the drafting of the actual regulations is completed.

MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what was the largest number of Chinese coolies employed in South Africa since the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance was introduced, and how many are employed now; whether the Chinese coolies now employed are still forbidden to engage in skilled labour in any of the fifty-seven kinds of employment mentioned in Schedule 1 of the Ordinance; and whether, if this prohibition is no longer in force, it has been explained to the coolies that they are at liberty to engage in them; whether the Chinese coolies are still forbidden to be employed on any but unskilled labour in the exploitation of minerals within the Witwatersrand district; whether the Chinese coolies are still prohibited, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, to leave the premises on which they are employed, unless by permission of an agent of the importer, and in no case for more than forty-eight hours after the issue of the permit; and whether in any, and, if so, in what ways the terms of the Ordinance have been varied, or its provisions relaxed in favour of the Chinese coolies.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The number employed on February 28th was 50,000, and was the largest number employed up to the present. There has been some wastage since, but the Secretary of State has no later official figure. The labourers are still subject to the disabilities enumerated in the Question. It was never proposed by His Majesty's Government to remove the prohibitions against the Chinese engaging in skilled labour during the period of the continuance of the existing Ordinance. The removal of such prohibition would no doubt be of great advantage to the mineowners as enabling them to substitute a much cheaper form of skilled labour for the skilled British labour now employed. But it would certainly not be in the interests of the white community. The objectionable provisions in the amending Ordinance of 1905 which are being removed are (*a*) the holding of trials on mine premises; (*b*) deduction of fine from wages; (*c*) fining of head boy for not reporting offences; (*d*) collective punishment. Lord Selborne has telegraphed that practical effect has already been given to all these amendments of the Ordinance; but it is possible that legislation may be required to regularise one or two of these amendments, and such legislation must be delayed until the Legislative Council meet.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Does not the hon. Gentleman know that the mineowners were opposed to the use of Chinamen for skilled labour from the beginning? In his Answer the hon.

Gentleman would seem to have suggested that the mineowners were in favour of it. ["No."]

*MR. CHURCHILL: I certainly did not intend to make any suggestion of that kind; I merely pointed out that it would be to the interest of the mineowners and conducive to cheaper working if Chinamen were allowed to be employed in all forms of work, skilled and unskilled.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Is it not the fact that Mr. Woods, secretary of the Johannesburg Miners' Association, has repeatedly complained of mineowners attempting to place Chinamen on skilled white work.

[No Answer was returned.]

AN HON. MEMBER: When will Papers be laid upon the Table to show the number of Chinamen employed in the mines?

*MR. CHURCHILL: If that means when further Blue-books on the Chinese Ordinance are to be laid, I cannot say. A Blue-book was published at the beginning of the session upon this Question, and I think it would be better to wait a little longer before publishing another.

Martial Law in Natal.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Governor of Natal has made any representations to His Majesty's Government in justification for the prolonged period during which martial law in Natal has lasted; and whether any steps are being taken to withdraw the martial law proclamation.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The proclamation of martial law by the Governor has taken place on the advice of his Ministers who will have to justify their action to their own Parliament in regard to both its proclamation and its duration. The Secretary of State is not aware that steps are as yet being taken to withdraw the proclamation. With regard to the administration of martial law, the Secretary of State has received a telegram from Sir Henry McCallum stating that five cases of death sentences passed by a court-martial, for sedition and insurrection on the south coast have been considered by the Executive Council. The Governor explained the facts of the case, and how the case differed from the murder of the police officers. In all five, cases the Council advised him in favour of clemency, and he accepted the advice tendered to him.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): As the Government declared the native question to be an Imperial one and not entirely a Colonial one, I beg to ask whether in future any imposition of taxation on the natives likely to cause them to rise in rebellion——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: I beg to ask whether the Under-Secretary's attention has been drawn to the fact that martial law, having been proclaimed on February 9th, has been made retrospective so as to cover acts done on the 8th, whether there are any precedents for such a use of the Royal prerogative, and whether any representation has been made to the Governor of Natal on the subject.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I think that if the hon. Member will consider that martial law is the total or partial suspension of the ordinary law, he will realise that there is nothing to prevent court-martial from dealing with acts committed prior to the proclamation of martial law. Acts done in pursuance of martial law are not done by use of the Royal prerogative, but are illegal until confirmed by an Act of indemnity.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD; Would the hon. Member answer the second paragraph as to whether there is any precedent for the retrospective action of martial law.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I am not aware. But as I explained to my hon. friend the use of the Royal prerogative is not brought in.

MR. J. WARD: I should like to ask whether, seeing that the ordinary Courts are still sitting, the Government intend to advise the withdrawl of the proclamation of martial law.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I have every reason to believe that the Government of Natal are very anxious to withdraw the proclamation on the earliest possible opportunity. I believe that opportunity will not arise until their Parliament has met, which I think, is on May 3, when a Bill of indemnity can be introduced. In the meantine, the application of martial law is being restricted to the disturbed districts, although technically in operation over the whole country. It will be seen from the telegram I read in answer to an earlier Question that martial law is being administered with care and consideration by the responsible Ministers of the Natal Government.

New Railways in the Transvaal.

Mr. J. WARD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the proposed sanction by the responsible authorities in the Transvaal of a new railway from Nelspruit, or Alkmaar, to Pilgrim's Rest, which can only benefit the mining community, in preference to the railway planned by the late Boer Government, from Belfast, via Dullstroom and Lydenburg, to Nelspruit, which would benefit both the agricultural and mining interests of the Transvaal Colony; and what action, if any, the Colonial Office propose to take in the matter.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: It is within the knowledge of the Secretary of State that railway construction in the district referred to will be considered by the local authorities if suitable proposals are made by persons interested, but no information has been received as to the exact points raised by the hon. Member. The decision as to the precise route to be followed by a railway is a matter which may properly be left to the local authorities and their expert advisers. I may add that Lord Selborne has shown himself keenly alive to the desirability of developing the agricultural resources of the two new Colonies by means of railways, several of which have been planned for the especial purpose of bringing the agricultural districts into contact with the industrial centres, which are of course their chief markets.

Inter-Colonial Conference in South Africa.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that the Inter-Colonial Customs Conference in South Africa has decided to propose to the several Colonial Governments an increase of the preferential duty for English merchandise from 2½ per cent. to 5 per cent.; whether such increase will be approved in the case of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony by His Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether His Majesty's Government will be prepared to offer any and what compensation to the inhabitants of these Colonies for the sacrifices which this increased burden will entail upon them.

Mr. CHURCHILL: My right hon friend has asked me to answer this Question for him. There has not yet been time to receive the decisions of the Customs Conference, which will, of course, be subject to approval by the legislatures of the respective Colonies.

Servia.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the conditions under which this country would be ready to resume diplomatic relations with Servia have been specified in writing to a Servian agent; and, if so, what are those conditions.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The question of the renewal of diplomatic relations between England and Servia cannot be discussed between the two Governments so long as the regicide officers hold official positions and influence the Servian Government. In the event of these officers being withdrawn from their positions and of the King agreeing to send a representative to Belgrade, it would of course be understood that the officers in question would not be reinstated.

Police Constables and Army Reserve.

Mr. MYER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that police constables who happened to be in the Reserve, and who were called up to do service for their country in July 1882 in the Egyptian campaign for periods varying from two to twelve months, are not allowed to count this time as service in the police, although police constables in the Reserve, when recently called to serve in South Africa, had such time of absence counted for pension as though they had not been absent; and if he will take into his consideration the adjustment of this difference of treatment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Yes, Sir, I have had this point under my consideration. As I informed the hon. Member for the Kennington Division on 12th March,† it is a matter that requires legislation and is dealt with in Clause 3 of the Police Superannuation Bill now before Parliament. A special Act (the Police Reservists Act, 1902) was passed to meet the case of police called out for service in South Africa.

MR. MYER: Then I take it they are reinstated.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

Lambeth Barbers and Early Closing.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that twelve months have elapsed since the hairdressers and barbers of Lambeth presented a petition to the Lambeth Borough Council in favour of early closing, and that the Lambeth Borough Council made an order for early closing on March 29th last; and is he now prepared to approve that order, so that it may be put into force forthwith.

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe that this matter has been under the consideration of the Lambeth Borough Council for about a twelvemonth. They have now, on the 31st ultimo, submitted an order to me for confirmation. The order must, in pursuance of the Regulations, lie in my Department for a month for the receipt of objections. At the end of that time I will without delay take the question of confirming the order into consideration.

Conveying Convicts in Omnibuses.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether twelve manacled convicts, in convict dress, were recently conveyed in an omnibus from Wormwood Scrubbs to Waterloo Station, exposed in crowded streets to the public view; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of making other provision so as to avoid spectacles of this nature.

MR. GLADSTONE: I find on inquiry that a party of prisoners who were being moved to Winchester, were conveyed last Wednesday by omnibus from Wormwood Scrubbs Prison to Waterloo Station, but I am informed that the curtains of the omnibus were drawn, and that the exposure of the prisoners to the public view was avoided as far as possible. The Governors of His Majesty's prisons have very explicit orders to guard against any undue publicity in the transfer of prisoners from one prison to another; and I am satisfied that they do their best to comply with these orders. I will consider, in connection with the Estimates, the possibility of using prison vans in future at Wormwood Scrubbs, though this would involve considerable extra expense.

The Unemployed.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr, Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Central Body (London) under the Unemployed Act is almost at a standstill for lack of funds; and whether he proposes taking any action to enable it to continue to register and find work for the unemployed of the metropolis.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The Unemployed Workman Act does not contemplate that application for assistance under it will be received, or that such assistance will be provided, at all times. The Distress Committees in London were only required by the central body to receive applications during the period ended March 31st last, and the central body resolved that after that date no application should be received except in respect of colony works and emigration. They further resolved not to start new work, subject to certain exceptions, and that, apart from work in which the training is an important element and from work recently started, existing work should be discontinued after Easter. But I do not understand that the central body are almost at a standstill. On March 31st the number of men at work was 3,390, and it is expected that the closing of the work, which will be gradual, will not be completed before the end of June. As my hon. friend is aware, the Government have intimated their intention to introduce a Bill to amend the Act, but I cannot give any intimation at the present time as to what the proposals of the Bill will be.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 921.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: May I ask when the Bill is likely to be introduced?

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Bill will take its proper place in order of precedence in the programme of the Government.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: May I ask whether there is any indication as to when this Bill is likely to be introduced?

MR. JOHN BURNS: There is no indication.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Then I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to this matter on the Motion for Adjournment.

Discretionary Powers to Poor Law Guardians.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of an inquest held at Poplar on 5th April to inquire into the death of a seventy-five-years old dock labourer named James Eaton, who had previously resided at Limehouse, whose death, the jury agreed, had been brought about by want of food, and to the statement of the relieving officer that the guardians could do nothing, because Mrs. Macdonald, the deceased man's daughter, with whom he had been living, and who was earning only 10s. per week, out of which she had to pay 4s. 6d. per week for rent and maintain two children, had been deserted by her husband; and, if so, whether he will advise such an amendment of the law as will give the poor law guardians sufficient discretionary powers to enable them to grant such outdoor relief as will in future obviate such an incident.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I understand that on the 29th March application was made to one of the relieving officers of the Stepney Union for the admission of the deceased to the workhouse, that he was removed to the infirmary of the workhouse on the same day suffering from bronchitis and old age, and that he died there on the 3rd instant. I have not seen the report of the inquest, but I understand from the clerk to the guardians that what the relieving officer stated at the inquest was that if Mrs. Macdonald would apply for relief her case would be submitted to the guardians, and that if relief were given a warrant for the apprehension of her husband, who has deserted her, would be applied for. If Mrs. Macdonald is in need of relief it is competent for the guardians to give her relief out of the workhouse, but I am informed that no application has yet been made by her or by any one on her behalf.

Mail Service between Ireland and England.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received further requests from towns in the North of Ireland to establish a mail to England via Greenore and Holyhead; and whether he is now in a position to announce that this additional facility will be granted.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): If the hon. Member will postpone this Question until after the Easter recess I will give him his Answer then.

New Post Office at Bangor.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has now received the memorial from the majority of the urban district councillors of Bangor, county Down, pointing out that the site proposed for the new Post Office is the most unsuitable and most inconvenient that could be selected; and whether this site will now be abandoned.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have received the memorial, and as I stated in this House on the 5th instant,† in reply to a previous Question by the hon. Member, I have called for a further report in the matter.

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† See Reply to Mr. T. L. Corbett: (4) *Debates*, cliii., 107.

Postmaster-General and Telephone Department.

MR. J. WARD : I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why he has refused to receive a deputation from the night operators of the Telephone Department, who desired to lay their grievances before him.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON : The night operators placed their case before me very fully in writing; and I considered it carefully. I did not think that any advantage would be gained by a deputation or fresh light thereby thrown on the question, especially pending the sitting and report of the Select Committee on Postal Servants.

St. Leonards Sorting Office.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the assistant superintendent in charge of the St. Leonards sorting office was withdrawn from his duties to test a rural postman's walk on the 31st of March last, no substitute being provided to cover his duty, which had in consequence to be performed by other officers in addition to their own duties; and whether he will explain why the test in question was not performed by the inspector of postmen.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: This Question involves local inquiry, which is being made. I will give the hon. Member the desired information as soon as I can.

Lord Stanley's Promise to Postmen's Federation.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that Lord Stanley made a promise to a deputation from the Postmen's Federation, on the 26th January, 1905, that special allowances would be granted to selected officers employed at the larger provincial towns, for performing indoor duties; and can he see his way to redeeming this promise.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am aware that the matter was referred to on the occasion in question. It is still in an experimental stage, and I hope soon to be in a position to say whether it is practicable to adopt it generally at some of the larger offices.

The Turner Pictures at the Tate Gallery.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what is the estimated value of the Turner pictures lately discovered, and exhibited at the Tate Gallery.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): It is imposible to give such an estimate.

Customs Department Grievances.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will institute a Parliamentary Inquiry into the alleged grievances of the second-class examining officers in the Customs Department.

MR. MCKENNA: No, Sir. I see no necessity for such an inquiry.

Furniture of Non-provided Schools.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Board of Education has ruled that it falls to the managers of a non-provided school to provide the furniture of such school; whether that ruling is in accordance with previous rulings of the board; and, if not, on whose advice the later ruling was given; and whether by an unofficial letter the Minister of Education has expressed his willingness to recommend a modification of the later ruling in the case of a school erected by Mr. Cadbury; and, if so, in what direction and for what reason.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I must refer the noble Lord to the Answer I gave on Monday, the 9th inst., to a written Question on this subject from the hon. Member for Kerry, S.† Since that Answer was given, the Government have now been definitely advised that the arrangement referred to in that Answer and in the unofficial letter quoted in the noble Lord's Question is not legally possible, having regard to the fact that a school must, as the board are now advised, be properly equipped as a public elementary school before the local authority can properly maintain it. I am sorry this should be so, as I should like to have seen carried out proposals made before the new ruling, but this seems now impossible both in Mr. Cadbury's and other cases.

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† See col. 967.

Education Bill.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that at least £1,000,000 would be necessary for the purposes of the Education Bill introduced by him to-day, what amount will be allocated to Ireland by way of an equivalent grant, and to what purposes it will be devoted.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The hon. Gentleman's Question is entirely premature, and I cannot give any Answer to it at present.

Engineer's Report on Cainan Canal.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether he will allow the engineer's Reprot on the Crinan Canal, which was brought before the Canal Coommission by the secretary to the Commissioners for the Crinan and Caledonian Canals, to be printed and laid upon the Table of the House.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The publication of such Reports lies with the Commissioners, and is not within the jurisdiction of the Secretary for Scotland.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are required to swear that they will not join any secret society; whether this regulation applies to freemasonry; and, if not why such a distinction is drawn.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative, and to the second in the negative. The terms of the oath are prescribed by statute, 6 William IV., cap. 13, section 17, the Society of Freemasons being expressly excluded from the prohibition applying to secret societies.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Are not the members of the constabulary forbidden to join the Good Templars? I understood so from the right hon. Gentleman the other day.†

MR. BRYCE: I understand the Good Templars would come under the category of secret societies.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked who had the delicate duty of deciding what is a secret society.

MR. BRYCE: I presume that the constabulary authorities give the best interpretation they can of the terms of the statute.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry and see whether it is not the fact that this has been the cause of much of the unpopularity of the force?

[No Answer was returned].

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask whether the Chief Secretary can state what percentage are registered as Catholics in the various ranks of the Royal Irish Constabulary, including constables, acting-sergeants, sergeants, head constables, district inspectors, and county inspectors.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector-General that on December 31st last the percentages of Catholics in the various ranks of the Royal Irish Constabulary were as follows:—Constables, seventy-five; acting-sergeants, sixty-seven; sergeants, seventy-two; head constables, sixty-seven; district inspectors, twenty-nine; and county inspectors, eleven.

Constable Anderson.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state where Constable Anderson, late of Kiitimagh, is now stationed; and whether any complaints have been made against him since his transference from Kiltimagh.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Inspector General that Constable John Anderson, formerly of Kiltimagh, was stationed at Aughnacloy, County Tyrone, up till the 10th inst., when he was transferred to County Meath. It would be contrary to practice to give information as to any disciplinary complaints made against a constable.

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† See Col. 517.

Mr. MACVEAGH : Can the right hon. Gentlemad say why he was removed from Meath ?

Mr. BRYCE : No, that is exactly what I cannot say.

Mr. MACVEAGH : I could tell him.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL : Do I understand that the man has been removed from his position ?

Mr. BRYCE : Yes, Sir.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL : I am glad to hear it.

Reduction of Rents, County Down.

Mr. MACVEAGH : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission have made any, and, if so, what, effort to ascertain if the Earl of Annesley and the Marquess of Downshire have withdrawn their scales of voluntary reductions for second-term rents in the county of Down ; whether the withdrawal is attributed by the Land Commission to the fact that the Sub-Commission, of which Mr. M'Connell is a member, have been giving smaller reductions than the landlords themselves were willing to agree to ; and, if not, whether he can state for what reason the scale of voluntary abatements was withdrawn.

Mr. BRYCE : I have referred this Question to the Land Commission, who inform me that they have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member's similar Question of Wednesday last.† Hon. Members may supply themselves with information. Obviously I have none.

Mr. MACVEAGH : You did not reply then.

Mr. BRYCE : Yes, Sir, I did. I replied that the Judicial Commissioners could not give any reply.

Portadown Urban District Council.

Mr. LONSDALE : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Portadown Urban District Council a representation setting forth the impossibility of collecting rates from poor people occupying houses valued at £4 and under ; and whether he will introduce a Bill to amend the Law relating to the collection of rates, so as to make the landlord responsible for the payment of rates on this class of property.

Mr. BRYCE : I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for West Cavan on Wednesday last.‡

Appointment of Temporary Assistant Commissioners.

Mr. LONSDALE : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many applications were received for appointment to the positions of temporary Assistant Commissioners in the Land Commission ; who conducted the examination into the capability and experience of the candidates ; what tests were applied ; and whether the Report of the examiner will be laid upon the Table of the House.

Mr. BRYCE : The total number of applications received was very large, and could not be given without a long search through the books in which the applications are recorded. It would be contrary to practice and precedent to state in detail the methods employed for selecting the best candidates, but I may say that the capacity and experience of land of each of the twenty-seven assistant commissioners whose term of office was expiring were carefully inquired into. The same process was followed with twenty-two new candidates of whom the five possessing the highest qualifications were selected. No formal Report was prepared. The responsibility for the appointments rests entirely with the Irish Government, which has satisfied itself that the changes in the staff of the Land Commission now effected will lead to increased efficiency.

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† See Col. 513-4.

‡ See Col. 476.

Mr. LONSDALE: Is the right hon. Gentleman responsible for the appointments?

Mr. BRYCE: Certainly.

Printing Contract of Mullingar Board of Guardians.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Mullingar Board of Guardians, for the third year in succession, have given their printing contract to the person whose tender was the highest submitted; whether this Board last year was surcharged by the auditor of the Local Government Board the difference between the accepted tender and the lowest sent in; whether the contractor refunded the amount of the surcharge; and whether he will state the name of this contractor, and on what grounds his contract was accepted.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board understand that the facts are substantially as stated. The Board are unable, however, to say whether the contractor refunded the amount of the surcharge. The name of the contractor is Mr. J. P. Hayden, Mullingar. His contract was accepted for the year 1905–6, on the grounds that he had a printing office in Mullingar, that he employs local labour, and that he pays the maximum rate of wages, thereby benefiting the district. The guardians also stated as grounds for accepting this contract, the convenience of checking proofs, giving instructions, etc., and that Mr. Hayden had given satisfaction in the past.

Railway Extension in Ireland.

Mr. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the need which exists for the extension of the railway from Killala to Ballycastle, in the county of Mayo, to develop the industries, especially the fishing industry, in a poor and populous district; and whether, seeing that the railway from Ballina to Killala, built by State aid and worked by the Midland Great Western Railway, has proved a success, and that the company has expressed its willingness to work an extension of the line to Ballycastle, he will give the matter his early attention.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that the question of railway extension from Killala to Ballycastle has frequently been brought under the notice of the Irish Government. I understand that Ballycastle is a market town of some importance, but that there is not much sea fishing carried on from it. I am not aware that the Midland Great Western Railway Company has expressed its willingness to work an extension to Ballycastle. In reply to the concluding inquiry I can only say that the claims of the district will receive consideration in conjunction with those of other districts, if further funds for railway extension should become available.

Fair Rents in County Down.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Justice Meredith, in giving judgment in seventy-three fair rent cases from county Down on Friday last, raised the sub-commission rents in thirty-two cases, reduced them in four, and confirmed thirty-seven cases; and if he can state who were the assistant, legal, and lay commissioners who fixed the rents appealed against; what is the name of Mr. Justice Meredith's assessor; and if he has had any experience of Ulster farming.

Mr. BRYCE: I regard this as a judicial matter. I am informed by the Land Commission that the cases referred to in the Question were the subject of judicial decisions by the Land Commission Court of Appeal. The cases were heard and the decisions pronounced in open Court, and the results appeared in the daily newspapers. I have no further information in the matter.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Is it possible to get the information as to who fixed the rents originally and as to whether the assessor who sat with Mr. Justice Meredith had any experience of Ulster farming when he reduced them?

Mr. BRYCE: The Commission consider that this was a judicial function and it is not for them to give the information.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is the assessor a judicial functionary in any sense of the word? And can the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether his salary is a matter subject to discussion in this House?

MR. BRYCE: That is a Question.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Very well, Sir; I can only say that I beg to give notice that immediately after the resumption of business after the Easter recess I shall call attention to this matter.

MR. MACVEAGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether these rents were not fixed originally by Mr. Commissioner Bailey and whether he was not quite as good a judge of these matters as Mr. Commissioner Meredith.

MR. BRYCE: No, Sir; I do not know who fixed them.

Magowan and the Larne Council.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if, at the time of his appointment as relieving officer by the Larne Council, county Antrim, Magowan was ineligible; and, if so, why the Local Government Board has not annulled the election instead of waiting till Magowan became eligible, meanwhile leaving the poor and destitute of the district without a relieving officer.

MR. BRYCE: Mr. Magowan was ineligible at the time of his appointment, but as he informed the Board of Guardians that he would dispose of his licensed premises, the Local Government Board, in accordance with their usual practice, gave him an opportunity of doing so. He has since done so, but until the licence has been legally transferred, the Local Government Board will not ratify the appointment. In the meantime it is the duty of the Guardians to make temporary provision for the discharge of the duties of the relieving officer.

Queen's Scholars and Second Grade Schools.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will say what special consideration, on the abolition of the results system in April, 1900, the Queen's scholars received who obtained special distinction at the final examinations in July 1897, 1898, and 1899, and who were thereby entitled to be placed in the second division of first class after two years highly efficient service; how many of these, on becoming principals of second grade schools and having received their training diplomas, have been promoted to second grade; whether many of these teachers were placed at the minimum of third grade when the salaries were finally fixed in April, 1901; and whether all the cases of this class, who now only receive third grade salary, will receive special consideration at the forthcoming revision of salaries.

MR. BRYCE: Queen's scholars who passed with special distinction in 1897 or 1898 and had two years good service to their credit either immediately before or immediately after April 1st, 1900, were as a rule granted the equivalent of the difference between second class salary and second division of the first class salary in their consolidated incomes under the new rules. Teachers who passed with special distinction in 1899 could not complete two years highly efficient service on or about April 1st, 1900, and in these cases the consolidated incomes were fixed under the new rules which provide for increments and promotions in connection with which passing with special distinction under the old rules receives consideration. The Commissioners inform me that each case was dealt with on its merits, and that they have plenary powers which have been liberally exercised, to raise on appeal the grant of consolidated income in cases in which the operation of the rule is deemed inequitable. No national schools are recognised as second grade schools; promotion in grade depends mainly on length and efficiency of service. Though in some cases training is essential, the possession of a training diploma does not in itself warrant promotion. The figures for which the hon. Member asks cannot be given without a careful examination of the records of the office which would take much time. The Commissioners inform me that they cannot promise special consideration at the forthcoming revision of salaries to teachers of the kind referred to who now receive third grade salary only, but they will consider any particular case brought under their notice which has not already been fully investigated.

The Bahr-el-Gazal Difficulty.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private notice. Namely, whether a settlement of the Bahr-el-Ghazal difficulty has been arrived at with the Congo Government.

Sir EDWARD GREY: A final settlement has not been come to, but a *modus vivendi* has been arranged pending negotiations for a definite settlement which will begin after Easter. In the meantime arrangements have been come to which will prevent any difficulty arising between Egyptian and Congo State posts and any confusion as to the administration of the country.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask whether Congolese troops are now in occupation of Sudanese territory, as has been the case for some time past.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The *modus vivendi* is roughly this: any post occupied by a Congo State force subsequent to a certain date, about a year ago, will be withdrawn. Those that were there prior to that date will for the present remain, but the Administration of the disputed territory will be Sudanese.

NEW BILLS.

HOURS OF LABOUR (BAKEHOUSES) BILL.

"To restrict the Hours of Labour in Bakehouses to forty-eight hours per week," presented by Mr. Wilkie; supported by Mr. James Haslam, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. Jenkins; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 172.]

NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND BILL.

"To establish a Board of Trustees to manage the National Galleries of Scotland; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]

VALUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To effect an equitable administration of any new general Valuation in Ireland," presented by Mr. James O'Connor; supported by Mr. O'Malley and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 174.]

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) asked leave of the House to alter the terms of the Resolution† which he had put on the Paper relating to the adjournment for the Easter holidays, in order that the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill might be passed before the adjournment. It was a Bill of pressing importance which had just come down from the Grand Committee, and he believed that no impediment would be placed in the way of its passing through the remaining stages. He begged to move, "That this House, at the conclusion of the Afternoon Sitting this day, do adjourn until Tuesday, the 24th of April."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at the conclusion of the Afternoon Sitting this day, do adjourn until Tuesday, 24th April.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) agreed that the Seed Potatoes Supply Bill ought to be passed.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked whether this was not the Motion on which the general discussion on matters of policy must take place.

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is not quite so. In order to bring the business of the House to a conclusion it will be necessary to move, "That this House do now adjourn," and on that question a general discussion may take place.

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† The Resolution as it stood on the Paper was as follows: "Adjournment of the House (Easter), That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, the 24th April."

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House, at the conclusion of the Afternoon Sitting this day, do adjourn until Tuesday, 24th April.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SEED POTATOES SUPPLY (IRELAND) BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said he desired to raise a question which had excited some misgiving in Ireland, and he thought justly. It referred to the termination of the employment by the Irish Government of some Assistant Temporary Land Sub-Commissioners, and the appointment in their place of other men. He wished to say at once that he did not raise the question with any intention of charging against the Irish Government political bias, because when the question was raised the other day, the Chief Secretary had disavowed any political bias in the action he had taken. He (Mr. Long) held, and had always held, that it was ridiculous in a country where we govern under a Parliamentary system to charge Ministers because they appointed men to offices who were political supporters of their own. If the alleged reasons which rendered the offices vacant were correct, and if the men appointed to fill them were qualified, he thought it was absurd to blame a Minister because he selected supporters of his own to fill the offices. The case he wished to raise was totally different. He thought he would be able to show that, in the first place, the vacancies had been arbitrarily, unjustly, and even cruelly created, and that the appointments made to fill them had been made in an irregular manner. He admitted at once that the sub-Commissionerships had always been regarded as temporary appointments. It was quite obvious that that was necessary, because the work varied in character and extent as time went on, and as Acts of Parliament were altered. It was therefore necessary that the Government should have power to get rid of officers who were either inefficient or not required owing to decrease of work. In the present case these conditions did not obtain. So far as he could ascertain, whenever appointments had lapsed, if there had been nothing alleged against the conduct of the officers who filled them, and if they had performed their duties creditably and satisfactorily to the Government, they were almost invariably reappointed. In this particular case, five Assistant Commissioners had been dismissed in what he regarded as an arbitrary and cruel fashion, and, as he was informed, without any charge being made against them, without any complaint being addressed to them as to the performance of their duty, and without notice except of the most abrupt and sudden character. It was quite evident that they had not been got rid of owing to shortage of work, because five other gentlemen had been appointed in their places. If that statement of the case was correct, as he believed it was, surely the description he had given of it, that the discharge of these gentlemen, or the refusal of the Government to re-employ them, was unjust and cruel, was justified. Further, he would say that unless the Chief Secretary for Ireland was able to show that the statements made in Ireland were without foundation, the matter of these discharges must have a very injurious effect upon all those officials who held their offices subject to the determination of the Government. He was assured that no charge of inefficiency had ever been made against these gentlemen; no suggestion had been made that they were unfair in the performance of their duty. One of them, he understood, had been continuously employed for ten years, and at the time his employment was suddenly terminated, he had no less than fifty-four cases in hand, and was aware, owing to communications that had been made to him, that in addition to those fifty-four cases, there were at least 100 coming in with which he and his colleagues would have to deal. This particular Assistant

Commissioner had been sent out upon a voyage of work. Only quite recently he had been given these cases to inquire into and was engaged upon them. Another fact which bore strongly upon the case was the circumstance that when the last Land Act was passed it was intimated to these Assistant Commissioners that as this Act would necessarily bring the land question in Ireland to a termination by change of ownership, and therefore avoid the necessity for fixing rents, they must not enter upon cases which they could not complete, and they must realise that the time would very soon come when there would be no need for their services. But the other day, when their period of three years was drawing to an end no intimation of this kind was made. On the contrary, it was intimated to them that they were to start upon their work afresh, and that there were many cases which would occupy their attention; in other words, that there was plenty for them to do, and therefore, they had no reason to believe that their services would not be required. So far as he was informed, they were perfectly competent officers against whom no complaints had been made by those who employed them. When he made that statement just now he heard an ironical criticism from one or two quarters of the House. He did not suggest for a moment that no complaints had been alleged against these Assistant Commissioners, because he thought the Archangel Gabriel, if he were minded to come down and take the office of Assistant Commissioner, would not be able to avoid criticism. Whatever the Assistant Commissioner did he was open to the charge either by the landlords that he had made the rent too low, or by friends of the tenants that he had fixed the rent too high, and anyone conversant with the question of land and rent in any other part of the country would agree that a more unenviable task than that of fixing rent between landlord and tenant could hardly be imagined. What he said was, that so far as his recollection went, no complaints had been made against these gentlemen by those who were responsible for their employment, that was, by the Land Commission or by the Irish Government. He should like to ask the Chief Secretary whether, when their services were dispensed with, the opinion of the Land Commissioners was taken, and whether the Commissioners were asked whether in their judgment these gentlemen were competent to do their work, and had performed their duties impartially and properly. He should also like to ask in how many cases appeals had been lodged against their decisions, and in how many cases the appeals were upheld. If there were no complaints made by their employers, if these gentlemen were competent to perform their duties, if they had discharged them for a long time to the complete satisfaction of the Irish Government, if the Land Commissioners did not express an adverse opinion, and if when appeals were lodged they were either few in number, or were dealt with satisfactorily, then he submitted that there was no possible justification for getting rid of these officials, unless it was the desire to put other men in their places. He was informed that when the present Secretary of State for India was responsible for the Irish Government, and when Mr. Gerald Balfour was responsible for it, unless there were records against the men proving them to be unfit for their places, if there was work for them to do they were invariably continued in their offices or re-appointed as vacancies arose. If that were true, then a new departure had been taken, which had naturally caused very much dissatisfaction in Ireland, and called for an explanation from the Chief Secretary as to why he had taken a new line with regard to these gentlemen, who were, after all, officials under the Government, and were, he believed, competent, honourable men trying their best to do their duty, and who naturally were to a large extent dependent upon the salaries which they had been drawing. In one case a gentleman assured him that not only had he been sent on a new tour of work, but, knowing as he did the number of cases in reserve, he had no reason whatever to believe that his services would be dispensed with. He was a considerable distance from his home actually engaged on the work, and the only intimation that he received that his services were to be dispensed with was a telegram which he got at 4 o'clock in the evening telling him that his office as a Temporary sub-Commissioner would terminate that evening. If that were true, and the information came to him from the gentleman himself, whatever they might think of the man they ought not to have treated him in that way. If the man was incompetent they ought to have told him so and to have given him decent notice. But in these particular cases the notice was of the shortest possible description, and the men were treated not merely unjustly but cruelly, because no opportunity was given to them to look elsewhere for work. It was also alleged that these men were had up to Dublin, where a series of questions was addressed to them by the Under-Secretary, and the impression left on the minds of some of these gentlemen was that the charge against them—if charge there were—was that they had not sufficiently reduced rents, and that on that ground their conduct had been unsatisfactory. But what were those men supposed to do? They were supposed to go out and fix the rents and there was an appeal against their decision. He submitted that it did not rest with any member of the Irish Government—certainly not with a permanent official—to express an opinion as to the just or unjust character of the rents; a conclusion could only be arrived at by men on the spot knowing the conditions of the farm and of the particular district. That being so, it was not a just ground of complaint against these men, and they had been unfairly and cruelly treated. He would now pass from the case of the men who had not been re-employed and come to the case of the men who had been put in their places. Here, again, he was not going to make any suggestion of political bias, because that he dismissed absolutely. He was not going to complain that these gentlemen were supporters of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, because if it were true he saw nothing improper in that fact provided that the men were competent for the work they had to perform. But the Chief Secretary knew that during the time when Mr. Gerald Balfour was at the Irish office he arrived at an arrangement between the Irish Government, the Treasury, the Land Commission, and the Civil Service Commissioners, under which certain tests of examination were to be applied to any new sub-commissioners. During the short time that he (Mr. Long) was Chief Secretary, applications were made to him by gentlemen possessing the necessary qualifications—that was to say, persons who were practising barristers or solicitors of least six years standing, and who possessed an acquaintance with the value of land and knowledge of the principles of land surveying, and so on. The answer he sent to each application was that the application could only be considered on the understanding that they were prepared to submit themselves to that Civil Service test. That was a rule which had been adopted in regard to many other appointments of a somewhat analogous kind in the English Departments, and was, he thought, a very salutary one. He was informed, however, that the new appointments in Ireland had been made without that examination being passed by the applicants. If that were true the rule must have been abrogated, and he wished to ask the Chief Secretary whether it was not the first instance in which the custom had been departed from since the rule was first passed. Why was it that in regard to these new appointments the conditions had not been enforced? He did not complain of the unfitness of the new candidates. He knew nothing about their unfitness, and the Chief Secretary had told the House the other day that he knew nothing about their politics. He himself did know the politics of one or two of these gentlemen, because no one could be in Ireland for any length of time without knowing the politics of gentlemen on one side or the other. But he attached no importance whatever to that aspect of the question. What he did say was that the men who had not been reappointed had been treated in an unfair manner, in a manner quite contrary to precedent, and in a manner cruel to them, because it left them no opportunity of obtaining fresh employment. Unless an arrangement of this kind could be justified it must have a bad effect on Civil servants generally. It was hard on those men who had given the best of their service to the Government of the country to be treated in a manner which they would not employ towards their own domestics. If, having given their defence, it was still decided not to employ them, then they should be given a reasonable opportunity of getting employment elsewhere and not left, as they had been, without reason, without justification, without any information at all, practically without notice to look elsewhere for work. They had been thrown away like an old glove. He regretted very much that it had been thought necessary for the Government to take action of this kind, because it was of the utmost importance that those who were employed by the Government should feel that their employment so long as they did their duty would be continuous, and that they would be treated at least as well as any private servant by a private individual.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he was exceedingly anxious that the House should understand the importance and gravity of the question which had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin. It might be supposed by hon. Members who were not acquainted very intimately with Irish affairs that the question raised to-day was merely a question of the re appointment or the contrary of a few subordinate officials in Ireland. It was really a matter very far from that. It was one of the mightiest questions affecting the whole Irish problem which could possibly be raised. Indeed it was so important and serious that he and his friends intended on the very first day allocated to Irish Estimates after the Recess to bring the whole question forward in a serious manner, when a real issue could be raised. To-day, of course, there could not be anything except a few desultory words from each side of the House. The question of rent-fixing in Ireland had, ever since the Act of 1881, been a most vital question, affecting not only the well-being and prosperity of the people, but the problem of Irish government and of order and peace in the country. The problem of the fixing of rents had become far more important since the Act of 1903, because the purchase price on which the tenants were acquiring their holdings under that Act was based entirely on the rents they were paying. At the time the Act was passed the period for the second revision of judicial rents had arrived. Therefore anything that bore on the fair fixing of this second rent, anything that bore on the belief of the people in a fair and impartial administration of the law in fixing the second-term rents, was of the most vital consequence to the whole Irish problem. That was the question which had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that it had been the invariable custom at the end of three years to reappoint the commissioner.

MR. WALTER LONG: As far as I know.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that so far as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin and his friends were concerned that had been the invariable rule, because the appointments were originally made by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, no. They were continuous, and I was referring to the appointments made by the present Secretary of State for India when he was Chief Secretary.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: How long was he Chief Secretary?

MR. WALTER LONG: Three years.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he would like to know how many of these appointments terminated during the official *régime* of the present Secretary for India. His point was that the appointment of these temporary land commissioners for the fixing of fair rent in Ireland had been entirely in the hands of the landlord party in Ireland. They had been landlords, land agents, military officers, and "hangers-on" to a large extent in one shape or another of the landlord party, which was the ruling party during those years, and of course when the period of three years came to an end they were invariably reappointed by the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors. The appointments were not only of men who were regarded by the people generally as landlord partisans, but they were Unionist appointments. The *Irish Times*, the organ of the Unionist Party in Ireland, had described these gentlemen as Unionists and Protestants. He for his part did not care in the least what the politics of a man were and still less did he care what his creed was in a matter of this kind where the single fixing of fair rent was concerned. But in a transaction where an enormous mass of the people were Nationalists and

Catholics it was a significant circumstance that not one of the men appointed to fix those rents was either a Nationalist or a Catholic. He would read to the House the names of some of the appointments which expired the other day: Bagot, Bomford, Craig, March, Mowbray, Owen Smith, Robinson, Augustus West, Bassett, Crowsdale, and so on. There was scarcely an Irish name amongst them. They all were the appointments of the Unionist landlord party in Ireland during the last twenty years, and they had been re-appointed regularly when their period of service expired. His colleagues and he had every confidence that when the Chief Secretary came to deal with this matter he would bear in mind the added importance of these appointments by reason of the Act of 1903, and that he would not feel bound by the action of his predecessors of the Unionist and landlord party. He saw a statement the other day that the Nationalist complaint was that the right hon. Gentleman had not appointed their nominees, that they had furnished him with a list and had asked him to appoint their friends. That statement was absolutely untrue. During the twenty-five years he had been in this House he had never asked for an appointment or an emolument of the smallest kind from any Government for any friend of his, and that had always been the policy of the Nationalist Party. They had always refused to submit any names and had sent in no list, neither did they make any application on behalf of any single individual. He wished to point out, however, that the men whose appointments were now running out did not possess the confidence of the tenant farmers in Ireland, that they had been appointed by a Unionist landlord Government, that they had been kept in office by re-appointments again and again, and the Chief Secretary was now asked as their term of office was running out to dispense with their services and to put in men whom he would select as being likely to fulfil their duties impartially. His (Mr. Redmond's) complaint was that the right hon. Gentleman had not done so, for he had re-appointed the old hacks. It was true that he had refused to re-appoint five out of twenty-seven, but all the rest he had re-appointed, and the re-appointments included those whom his Party and the tenant farmers regarded as the very worst amongst the men who had been recently actually raising rents on the second term revision. There were a great many people in Ireland who believed that a deliberate conspiracy for the purpose of keeping up or raising the price of land in Ireland had been entered into by these Commissioners and their friends. Although it was common knowledge that the value of land had been going down in Ireland the nominees of the Unionist and landlord Party on the second revision of rents had been refusing reductions and in some cases had been actually raising rents. He was sorry to say that the head Commission had also been following in the same footsteps. This was a large question, which must be dealt with in a thorough way on the Estimates, and he would now confine himself simply to touching the fringe of the question. He wished to allude to a letter of a very significant character written by the son of a county Down farmer to one of the Irish papers. He did not know how far the Member for South Dublin was speaking as the Leader of the Ulster Party, but it would be interesting to know——

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not speaking in a position which I do not occupy.

MR. JOHN REDMOND thought it would be an advantage to them if they had his services. It would be interesting to have the views of some representative of the Ulster tenant farmers upon this question. A son of a county Down farmer had written, pointing out that the Land Commission came to a decision the other day in seventy-three cases in that county. They were on appeal from the Judicial Commissioners. The Judicial Commissioners held their inquiry four years ago. Such was the delay in the process of the law in connection with land in Ireland. The head Land Commission confirmed thirty-nine of the decisions, actually raised the rents in thirty-three cases, and reduced the rents in four. That was to say that the proceedings of the head Land Commission, after the four years which had elapsed since the decisions were all come to, all tended in the direction of raising rents rather than the reduction of rents. Let him read this paragraph from the letter of the son of a tenant farmer in Down—

> "Negotiations are now proceeding in county Down for the sale of a Downshire estate. The question of terms is at issue at present between the rent office and the tenants, but Mr. Justice Meredith and the Land Commission kindly step in and give judgment in seventeen Downshire cases, raising the judical rents fixed by the sub-Commission in twelve cases, confirming five, and reducing none."

That was to say, that the operation of the Land Commission was tending directly to the raising of the price of land in Ireland. Under these circumstances he and his friends had the gravest reason to complain that the Government, who were not in the remotest degree bound by the action of their predecessors, and who knew that the Land Commission had been packed by the partisans of the landlords for the last twenty years, did not seize the opportunity when it was afforded, in order to remove these men and their baneful influence from the settlement of this question, and put into their place gentlemen who would deal impartially between landlord and tenant. He was sorry that this question had had to be raised in this perfunctory way on the present occasion, but he would ask the Government to give an opportunity on the first day of the Irish Estimates for the whole question to be fully gone into. For the present he confined himself to giving expression, on behalf of all his colleagues, and the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland generally, to their intense dissatisfaction at the action of the right hon. Gentleman in not listening to their representations, and reappointing to the Land Commission some of the worst Party hacks appointed by his predecessors in the Irish Government of the last twenty years.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said he was glad that the Irish Party had decided to raise this question as soon as possible after Easter. It could then be raised as an issue, and the House would understand clearly who among the Irish representatives were in favour of Irish rents being fixed by land agents and military officers. This was not a case where five men had been dismissed from the service of the Land Commission. There were twenty-seven of these men who held temporary appointments for three years. Those who had been reappointed had only got warrants for one year. These were purely temporary appointments; and when the right hon. Gentleman said the Land Commission appointments were not temporary, he was entirely wrong.

MR. WALTER LONG: I did not say they were.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that in addition there were twenty-five men who had permanent positions on the staff of the Commission. These temporary appointments were only made to take up work which the permanent officials could not reach, and were liable to be cancelled directly the work was done. The twenty-seven appointments which were of a temporary character expired on 31st March last. The Government, in his opinion, renewed warrants which they should not have renewed. They had renewed a certain number for twelve months only, and had allowed five to expire. In place of the five men whose warrants had expired they had appointed five new men. He did not care whether rents were fixed by Catholics or Protestants, although whether they were fixed by Nationalist or Tories was another question. Really it was high time that the House should understand what this question meant in Ireland. He heard gentlemen talking with the greatest liberality that they did not care who got the offices; but they must bear in mind that the Tory Government had been in office in Ireland practically for the last twenty years. If any one knowing Ireland would take up a list of the appointments they would be greatly astonished at it. There were twenty-one purchase Commissioners who had all been appointed by the Tory Government. They were all the nominees of landlords. The Duke of Abercorn and Lord Londonderry had recommended more men on that staff than any two men in Ireland. Of these gentlemen who were supposed to be perfectly impartial, twenty were Protestants and Unionists, and one was a Catholic. These figures were for 1905, but if hon. Members took the list at large they would see that in 1902 of sixty-two Commissioners twenty were Catholics and the rest Protestants. It was all very well for the right hon. Member for South

Dublin to talk about men being dismissed, but was it not high time that Catholics and Liberals who had stood by Liberalism, should have a look in? He saw nothing unreasonable in that. He happened to know that four of the five men who had been appointed were Nationalists, and one was an Ulster Liberal. These other men had all been appointed during the last ten or fifteen years by Tory Governments who, on the commendation of landlords in Ireland, had appointed men who were friends of the landlords. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the great mass of these Commissioners were men wedded to the landlord's view, otherwise they would not have been appointed. It was nothing outrageous that when a Liberal Government got into power they should seek to give the mass of the people a chance on the Irish Land Commission. These men had not been dismissed. Their warrants simply had not been renewed. He had known dozens of warrants expire in the same way during the last twenty years, and not a word had been said about it, because the work was done. He had the same fault to find with the Chief Secretary as the hon. Member for Waterford had. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have made some of the appointments. He had reappointed half a dozen men whom the Liberal Government might have been expected to send about their business. When the Estimates came on for discussion this question would have to be probed to the very bottom, and the House must be shown the kind of work that was being done by these men. It was not a question of prejudice. He sometimes thought that he could detect in the Chief Secretary's answers on the Land Commission evidence of a slight lack of sympathy for the tenants. These rents which were now raised were fixed four years ago, first of all by the Legal Commissioner, whom the right hon. Member for Dover thought so highly of that he actually appointed him one of the Estates Commissioners to work the new Land Act. Along with him in county Down were two sub-Commissioners Mr. Samuel Byers and Mr Wilson. These three men fixed the rents in seventy-three cases. Four years elapsed. Let them think of a tenant farmer waiting four years for the landlord to appeal against fair rent decisions, and not knowing where he was. Mr. Justice Meredith knew nothing about the value of land. The single assessor also knew nothing about Ulster farming. Mr. Justice Meredith, and this single Commissioner as an assessor, went to county Down and sat on these seventy-three cases; they raised the rents in thirty-nine cases. The assessor was not a judicial person. His salary was on the Votes, and it would be challenged at the very first opportunity. What was the meaning of all this? Let them imagine men with the shadow of Canadian cattle over the Irish farmer—and that was a very real thing for them to look forward to, because many men in Ireland believed that it would be impossile ultimately to keep them out, and that meant 25 per cent. off Irish agriculture. Let them fancy raising these rents in the face of a calamity that might come and sweep all the profit out of Irish farming. There was no remedy for that. The right hon. Gentleman had complained because the Chief Secretary had appointed five men. It was high time that they should have some prejudice in Ireland in favour of the tenants. Hitherto the prejudice had been all in favour of the landlords. Did the Conservatives imagine that though the Liberals were in office they (the Conservatives) were to remain in power; that though the Liberals were at the Castle the Tories were to be in power everywhere in Ireland? That was what the Tories were trying to work all the time.

Mr. WALTER LONG was understood to dissent.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said that those who had lived in Ireland a great deal longer than the right hon. gentleman knew the facts. This was not only a question of raising rents on the tenant. There was an overwhelming feeling taking possesion of Ulster that a deliberate conspiracy was on foot, and that the Land Commission was a party to it. Let them make no mistake. What had been done was to force up the rents in order to raise the purchase-price of the land. The nominees of the landlords were going about fixing the rents, and one of the Commissioners had actually raised the rents on the Downshire estate when the sale was absolutely in the hands of the negotiators. What did that mean? It meant "Make terms with your adversary quickly." It was hard enough on the tenant to have to pay an increased rent, but it was a greater injustice to have the value of the land increased fictitiously. He held that in making many of these appointments the Chief Secretary had committed a grievous error. He did not deny that he had personally pointed out to the Chief Secretary that these men were the nominees of the Tory Government, recommended by Tory landlords; that many of them were land agents and military officers. He had begged the right hon. Gentleman to go into the records of all these men, and see where they came from, what their qualifications were, and what they had done. The result was that only five were released from duty, and five new men appointed; but twenty-two had been left at large to go on with their work. He would not say that in the case of all the twenty-two their warrants should not have been renewed. On the contrary. He had never asked that the whole twenty-seven should be dismissed, but only that the Government should consider that this was a serious national issue. He asked the Chief Secretary to look at the credentials of these twenty-seven men and to look at the credentials of other twenty-seven men. But instead of doing that the right hon. Gentleman had appointed men who in the past had been forcing up rents, and who, protected by the Appeal Court, would continue their unholy work.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that when the hon. Member for South Tyrone made a speech it always acted as a tonic upon him. That hon. Gentleman and the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had spoken a good deal about the Downshire Estates, and had told the House, with all the force they were capable of, that the Land Commission was taking part in a deliberate conspiracy to force up the rents with the view of the landlord getting a higher price for his land. Such a statement was a very grave one. It was as grave as saying that one of the Judges of His Majesty's High Court of Justice in England had deliberately given a judgment against the law or the facts of a case. He repeated that it was a very grave statement to make, but every man in Ireland who looked at the facts without prejudice would say that the statement was absolutely unfounded. Judge Meredith had had a most distinguished and meritorious career, and statements of that kind could have no other object than to force this gentleman to give decisions contrary to what he thought was just. That was a very serious action for anyone to take. As to the Downshire Estates it was well known that there were no estates where the tenants had got on so well with the landlords, yet because the Commission had raised one or two rents in Ireland a complaint was made.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Thirty-nine out of seventy-three.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said that out of the thousands of cases which came before the Chief Commissioner in Ireland the hon. Member thought that because in a few cases he had raised rents, his action was unfair. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had said that the Land Commission was deliberately tending to raise the rent of land in Ireland. That was a very strong expression, especially coming from the hon. Member for Waterford, who led so large a Party in this House. It was a most grave accusation to make against the Commissioners. He might ask hon. Members who were not intimately connected with Ireland and who did not know anything about the land question there, to ask themselves what was the object of setting up an appeal to the First Commissioner. He had never before heard that Court spoken of in the terms in which it had been spoken of to-day, and it seemed absurd for the Government to set up an Appeal Court and then for this House to do all in its power to discourage landlords from availing themselves of that Court. It was technically true that the temporary Land Commissioners had not been dismissed, but as a matter of fact that was the case. There never had been a case in which sub-Commissioners had been refused a renewal of their engagements, except when the *personnel* of the Land Commission had been reduced or the men had been shown to be incompetent. This set of men, however, had been deliberately set aside for the purpose of putting in another set of men. He wanted to know if the Chief Secretary could show them that the men who had been put in were better men than those who had been displaced. If he could not do that a grave injustice had been done. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had gone further and said that not only should these five men be put aside but that the whole twenty-seven should have been similarly dealt with.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that he pointed out expressly that there were men on the Commission with whom he could be satisfied, but that there were others with whom he could not be satisfied. He said that the Government should examine into the qualifications of all the men and get the best they could.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG was obliged to the hon. Member for his explanation and apologised for saying that the hon. Gentleman had gone as far as he usually did. He was glad that he was willing that some of the twenty-seven men should remain. If this system was to obtain in Ireland the Justiciary of the Court would have to change with every change of Government. English Members would know that that was a very serious thing indeed. The Chief Secretary had by his action dealt a blow at the esteem in which the Land Commission was held, not only by the landlords but by the tenants. Under the circumstances it appeared that their best policy was to use the Land Purchase scheme so that the necessity for the Land Commission should disappear in a short time. He trusted the Chief Secretary would let them know very clearly upon what principle these new temporary sub-Commissioners were appointed, and how far he proposed to carry out the principle. He had no doubt that the chief fault found with the assistant Commissioners was that they were appointed by the Unionist Government. Perhaps the Chief Secretary would explain whether that was the reason.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): That had nothing to do with the matter.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that whatever was the cause of the line of action adopted by the right hon. Gentleman, they and everyone in Ireland would be glad to hear as to why these temporary assistant Commissioners' services had been dispensed with. The appointment of these Commissioners was a very important matter, because it had always been held from the establishment of the Land Commission that gentlemen who were appointed to these extremely difficult and delicate positions of Land Commissioners or sub-Commissioners should have a tenancy of considerable length. It stood to reason that if they were going to appoint a man to fulfil such delicate duties if he was given only a tenancy of one or three years they could not expect to get as good a man as if he were given a longer or a permanent tenure. For what period had these Commissioners been appointed?

MR. BRYCE: For one year.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG thought that such a period of appointment was very dangerous in practice.

MR. BRYCE: He is a temporary Commissioner.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG thought that to hold over a new Commissioner that he was only there for one year was a very dangerous course to pursue. It was a practice which was not in accordance with the course of legal appointments.

MR. BRYCE: These are not legal appointments.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said they were *quasi* legal appointments. The duties these Gentlemen had to perform were as difficult and delicate, and had more influence upon public opinion than many of the duties performed by those who held legal appointments. If men were to perform such difficult duties they ought to have a longer tenure of office than even three years, and they certainly should be appointed for more than one year.

*MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) thought that anyone at all acquainted with the matter would know that it was absolutely impossible in the choice of sub-commissioners to please both landlords and tenants. It occurred to him that if a sub-commissioner was tolerably well abused by both parties there was some chance that he had been reasonably impartial. In his long experience, not as a landlord or tenant, but as a counsel practising before the courts, he had never heard a good word said of a sub-commissioner either by landlord or tenant. He did not intend to continue the discussion on the relative merits of the sub-commissioners appointed, because he thought it would be idle. He thought he had a certain rough equity in his favour when he raised another question, because the Motion before the House, to give Members their Easter holidays had deprived him of an opportunity which had fallen to him under the ballot of bringing before this House a much more important question than the qualification of five sub-commissioners, and that was the very grave position of affairs at present in Ireland owing to the block in regard to the operation of the Land Purchase Act of 1903. An unfortunate state of things had been brought about by the want of both money and men to make the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903 work as rapidly as was desirable. He proposed to treat the matter as uncontroversial, or at all events as little controversial as any matter affecting Ireland could be amongst Irishmen. He believed, however, that all parties in Ireland looked to the Act of 1903 as something in the nature of a Treaty of Peace. It was hoped by all that it might, if fairly carried out, be the means of putting an end for ever to the miserable land question. There had been several Land Purchase Acts before the Act of 1903 which had on the whole worked well. The Act of 1885 commonly called Lord Ashbourne's Act—the first Land Purchase Act of any real utility—provided a sum of £5,000,000, which was rapidly absorbed, and in 1887 a further sum of £5,000,000 was provided. In 1891 power to make advances amounting roughly to £30,000,000 was granted. The sales under these Acts were very numerous, but naturally it was the estates of persons who were most anxious to sell or who had to sell that came first into the market, and probably before the Bill of 1903 was introduced practically all estates which could be attracted into the market by the terms offered under the former Acts had been sold, and land purchase had come to a standstill. The Act of 1903 had been described as an Act of compulsion by inducement. It offered inducements to both parties, and he thought that fact had not been lost sight of by either. It offered the tenant a lower rate of interest, and gave an extension of time in which to pay the instalments. It gave the landlords the inducement of the bonus of 12 per cent. and some simplification with regard to procedure. They had hoped that under that Act they would get rid of the tremendous incubus of the Irish Land Commission in its rent fixing capacity. That process of rent fixing had been an enormous cost to the taxpayers of the country. An enormous staff had to be kept up, and the salaries of a number of judicial and quasi-judicial Commissioners had to be paid. He did not, however, lay so much stress upon the cost as upon the general evils of the whole system of fixing fair rents. That system perhaps became inevitable from the general course of events in Ireland, and he quite recognised that the duties of the Land Commission could not come to an end until the Land Purchase Act had rendered its operations no longer necessary. Still, there was nothing he, and he believed anyone who knew Ireland, would more gladly see than this rent fixing come to an end. Not only was it a terrible burden on the country, but there had been a worse burden both on landlords and on tenants in the cost of fixing rents, in the expense of witnesses and expert witnesses, in the loss of time and temper, and frequently in the breaking up of amicable relations between landlord and tenant. The sooner they could get rid of the rent fixing work by the operation of the Act of 1903 the better. English and Welsh Members had very little idea of the terrible incubus the Land Commission was to Ireland. The tenant considered his rent too high, or he wished to get the advantages of fixity of tenure. The vast majority of the tenants in the West of Ireland held under rents probably not exceeding £6 per year. Each of these considered he should get a reduction of rent and the advantages of the Land Act. He commenced proceedings, and then after some months both parties got notice of a sitting of the Irish Land Commission to hear the case. The tenant went to the town, which might be a considerable distance from his place of residence. He employed a solicitor and brought witnesses, including a land valuer, or perhaps more than one. He had perhaps to hang about for two or three days until his case was reached, and hanging about in an Irish county town was generally found pretty dry work, and involved considerable expense. The landlord had to incur expenses similar to the tenants—often greater. When the case came on perhaps the tenant's rent was reduced from £6 to £4 10s., or £4, and that was the result of probably several days lost and considerable expense. That meant loss not only of time but of temper, and the employment of counsel and solicitors and great expense. Then in the case of rents even as small as £2 he had seen appeals taken to the superior tribunal. This caused delay, perhaps amounting, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone had stated, to four years before the trial came on, and during that period the tenant naturally did not care much to improve his holding, and in many cases he allowed it to deteriorate for fear of adversely affecting the decision when it was inspected by the Commission valuers. At the end of that time there was perhaps a small reduction of the rent fixed by the sub-Commissioners, or it might be raised, or confirmed, but at what cost of time, of money, of worry, and of annoyance to both parties! When the tenant had passed through the ordeal, however, he was all right for fifteen years. But what was the position of the landlord, who might have several hundred tenants on his property, and who might go into Court any day? It was perfectly correct to say that in the case of large estates, the estates had never since 1881, been free from litigation with its attendant cost. Could any country prosper under such conditions? But there was another and wider reason for wishing to see rent-fixing cease. They wanted to see the land question settled once and for all. They wanted to see the land war which had devastated Ireland for twenty-six years and had led to crime and outrage unspeakable, and had led Irishmen to regard each other as worse foes even than the foreigner, or the Saxon, brought to an end. They wished to see a settlement as the only chance of peace and contentment in Ireland. What were the obstacles in the way? The Land Act of 1903, he gladly admitted, had proved a success even beyond the anticipations of the right hon. Member for Dover, who introduced it. Advances had down to the end of January this year been applied for in connection with sales under the Act, amounting to £32,688,866. But unfortunately up to the present there had been nothing like that amount of money for the carrying out of those sales. How did that operate? The moment agreements were signed under which the tenants were to purchase their holdings the landlord ceased to be a landlord. He ceased to receive rent. He was entitled to receive only 3½ per cent. upon the agreed purchase money. The tenant, on the other hand, instead of getting a terminable annuity immediately, became liable to pay an interminable interest, and his becoming a freeholder was deferred until the cash was handed over to the landlord. He himself knew of many instances of people who had sold more than two years ago, whose titles had been passed, and yet they had not got their money. Therefore the tenants had remained paying interest and the landlord, instead of getting his money, which he could probably invest at a better rate of interest than 3½ per cent., if an absolute owner, only received that rate from the tenants, even when it could be recovered from them. It was perfectly wonderful to him how many sales had taken place, and how many landlords had recognised the spirit of the principle of peace embodied in the Act by being willing to sell their estates although there had been very little prospect of their getting ready money for them. He did not forget the fact that it was not estimated that sales would be so rapid, but it was very urgently necessary that the money should be forthcoming, because it was very hard on both landlord and tenant. The tenants were clamouring for compulsory purchase, and he had every sympathy with them, but that could not come if there was no money to pay people who were willing to sell under voluntary purchase. Many landlords were being subjected to very unpleasant pressure to sell their estates, and a good many upon whom this pressure was brought to bear were willing to sell provided they could get cash, but they could not sell if the time for payment was to be deferred for three, four, or five years, or even for an indefinite time. An unencumbered owner might be able to sell his estate and accept 3½ per cent., but a heavily encumbered landlord could not afford to do so, as he had to pay perhaps 6 per cent. interest while he was receiving 3½ per cent. It was very necessary that the Government should consider very carefully, if there were any amendment of the Act, the question of putting the case of encumbered estates first and allowing them to be paid ready money where available, because of the absolute necessity in case of encumbered owners of getting money to pay off the encumbrances. Another matter he heard with some dismay the other night. It was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman that the Land Commission staff would not be able to deal even with existing sales for four years. If that were so the land-purchase staff ought to be very much strengthened. Every one knew that the illustrious Judge, Mr. Justice Meredith, was overworked, and in addition to his duties on the Commission in carrying out the Act he had very often to go away as President of the Court to consider appeals in the country. The question of the appointment of a permanent or temporary Judge to assist Mr. Justice Meredith ought certainly not to delay the carrying out of these great reforms. He was sure the matter was engaging the attention of the Chief Secretary, but it was becoming every day more and more urgent, and he was glad to acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman had already promised a very considerable additional sum of money towards the working of the Act; but in addition to more money they wanted the further assistance in the Court of the Land Commission to facilitate the business of land settlement which was absolutely necessary for the welfare of Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said he had had the pleasure of being between two fires, and he was rather in a doubt whether to turn to the front or the rear in answering the very opposite charges brought against the Government. He would begin with what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin in reference to the non-reappointment of certain Commissioners. He must acknowledge at once, and that very cordially, the action of the right hon. Gentleman in entirely disassociating himself from any suggestion that the action of the Irish Government or his action in particular had been actuated by political motives. As he told the right hon. Gentleman some days ago, political motives had not entered into that matter at all. He did not quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman, however, in thinking that if he had allowed politics to come in, there would be no objection to his doing so. He confessed he thought politics ought not to come into these matters at all.

MR. WALTER LONG: I did not mean to convey that. All I said was that all other things being equal I did not think a Minister ought to be condemned because he appointed a man who was a supporter of the Government.

MR. BRYCE said that reminded him of a Scotch Judge who said he never appointed his cousin unless it were a case of *ceteris paribus*, but nearly always the *cetera* were *paria*. But these appointments as the right hon. Gentleman had admitted, were temporary appointments, but he said that *prima facie* they ought to appoint those who were appointed before. He did not agree with that at all. He thought it was only a question of the best men. But the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that at any rate there ought to have been longer notice given. Well, if any one of the five not reappointed suffered in any way by not having longer notice he was sorry for it. He must say that the time to deal with those matters was very short altogether and all the temporary Commissioners had this kind of notice—that their qualifications were all scrutinised and examined some time before the 31st March, and therefore they all had notice that the whole matter was being reconsidered, and that it was quite possible they might not be reappointed. There was also a very general belief in Ireland that a number of new appointments would be made, which was testified to by the fact that such an immense number of applications came in for employment in that way. Almost every one in Ireland who did not want to be a resident magistrate wanted to be an Assistant Commissioner, and many of them were willing to serve the Irish Government in both capacities. Therefore he thought those gentlemen all had reason to know that their appointments were expiring and that they need not expect that they would be renewed. The right hon. Gentleman had asked whether the opinion of the Land Commission was taken. Of course communication did pass, but the right hon. Gentleman knew it would be entirely contrary to precedent to disclose communications of that kind, which necessarily were confidential and derived their whole value from being confidential. The right hon. Gentleman had also asked what appeals there had been from the decisions of these Assistant Commissioners. He was afraid he could not possibly tell him without longer notice. Their services extended over some years; and it would be quite impossible for him without notice to tell how many appeals there had been and what was the result of the appeals. As the right hon. Gentleman would remember, there had been many cases previously, not only where people had proved their inefficiency but where they were removed because it was thought their work would not be wanted and where fresh men were appointed, and even there the fact that a man was appointed before was not deemed evidence that he would be appointed again. It was clear therefore that the fact of a man being appointed before did not give him a title to be appointed again. The right hon. Gentleman had also asked why the examination rule which had been laid down by a former Chief Secretary, the late Member for Central Leeds, was not employed in this case. He did not at all say that it might not be well sometimes to employ it. Perhaps it ought to be reintroduced, but in this particular case he came to the conclusion that it was not necessary, because there was the amplest knowledge of the special qualifications of the new candidates who were to be appointed, and it would have been a farce to subject them to examination of that kind to prove that they had knowledge the possession of which they had already proved by the work they had done. Let him say in regard to what was said by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, that his statement that he made no suggestion to him on the subject required no confirmation from him, but he was glad to have the opportunity of stating—what he intended to have said anyhow—that no suggestion for the appointment of any person reached him either from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, or from any one of his colleagues. What was the position which he found when March 31st was approaching, and those temporary Commissioners' terms were running out? He found they had all been appointed for three years only. Every one knew that his services might be dispensed with, and they were not civil servants in any sense of the word. None of them had any claim—not even a negative claim—to be reappointed, and cases had frequently occurred before in which persons who had been appointed one time were not reappointed afterwards. Under these circumstances he had to consider what was the proper thing to do. Was he to continue these men in the employment merely because they had been employed heretofore if better men could be found to do the work? It would have been much easier for him to continue them than to scrutinise the qualifications of all the candidates who applied. The work was extremely important, requiring the highest measure of knowledge, capacity, and care. It was always important, but it was doubly important at this moment, because these rents were now taken as the standard upon which the system of land purchase was based and the purchase-price had reference to the rent fixed. Under these circumstances it was important to obtain the best possible men. He had asked himself whether the men who had been doing this most important work were the best possible obtainable. Extremely careful inquiries were made into the qualifications of the candidates for employment, and he found amongst the new candidates a number who were decidedly and conspicuously better than some of those who had been acting as Assistant Commissioners. He was satisfied that these men had more knowledge of land and more experience than at least five of the gentlemen out of the twenty-seven whose term had expired.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): The new men were all Nationalists.

MR. BRYCE knew nothing of their politics. He was informed that they were not all Nationalists; but whether they were or not was a matter of perfect indifference to him. No question as to their politics, their religion, or whether they were landlords' or tenants' men was put to them. He knew nothing except that these were better men, and no one had ever impeached the capacity or experience of the five gentlemen appointed. With such important work to be done it was absolutely necessary to get the best men to do it. He believed there would now be greater confidence in the Assistant Commissioners, and the work of land purchase would go more smoothly. The question raised by the hon. Member for Waterford was one of the utmost importance, but whether any of the existing Commissioners were, as the hon. Member alleged, landlords' hacks he could not say, as he had no information beyond what had recently reached him as to their capacity. He certainly could not proceed upon the basis of interfering with the action they had taken in regard to fixing rents, and he could not think of constituting himself a court of appeal from the Commissioners in regard to fair rents. In reference to what had been said about Mr. Justice Meredith, he believed him to be a man of the highest character, and he had no reason to doubt that he brought a fair and unbiassed mind to bear upon his decisions.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I did not say anything of the kind about Mr. Justice Meredith.

Mr. BRYCE said he was glad to have that statement withdrawn. The Irish Government endeavoured to get for this difficult work the most capable men—men with the largest knowledge of the land and best fitted to inspire confidence. He was trying to get men absolutely free from bias to hold the scale of justice perfectly evenly between landlord and tenant, In this particular case, he believed he had corrected certain obvious deficiencies in the Assistant Land Commissioners. How much more remained to be done he would have to consider. This was one of the most difficult as well as most important questions which came before the Irish Government. Having upon this question failed to give complete satisfaction to either side, he cherished the hope that he had taken a safe middle course.

Mr. FETHERSTONHAUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer my Question about the block in carrying out land purchase for want of funds?

Mr. BRYCE said there had been a serious block in carrying out land purchase work, but that block was not primarily due to want of money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had undertaken to find a sum of £10,000,000 in the next twelve months for the operations of the Estates Commissioners, and the Commissioners thought that would be as much as they could deal with. If they could deal with estates faster, they could have a larger sum in the following year. Their staff seemed somewhat inadequate, and he had under consideration whether the staff could not be increased. The Government would do all that could be done to accelerate the progress of this most beneficent work of land purchase.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton) called the attention of the House to the fact that every British soldier had been deprived, without the authority of Parliament, of his one independent protection against the caprice of courts-martial and of the tyranny of the War Office. From the time of George I. until last year every soldier was entitled, after conviction by a court-martial, to an independent inquiry by a trained lawyer who was absolutely independent of the War Office. The Judge Advocate-General was in former times a Member of this House and a member of the Government; he had direct access to the Sovereign, and was responsible to the House of Commons. According to the Secretary of State for War the officer now known as Judge Advocate-General was a subordinate of the War Office and had no right of access to the Sovereign and no independent authority whatsoever, and was not responsible to this House. If Mr. Milvain were to come to the conclusion that the decision of a court-martial was irregular and wrong, and if the Secretary of State might say that he did not agree with him and that he thought it was regular and right, the House of Commons would know nothing about it, and they should have no right to ask what advice Mr. Milvain had given to the Secretary of State. If Parliament chose to carry out such a great constitutional change he should do his best to resist it, but Parliament had done nothing of the kind. He declared — and he hoped he would carry with him a considerable degree of support—that the Government had no authority whatever to make any change of the kind. Simmons, an acknowledged authority on the subject of courts-martial, in his standard work, said—

> "The Judge Advocate-General is a Parliamentary officer, appointed on a change of Ministry, and holding office by Letters Patent under the Great Seal. He is sworn of the Privy Council and is the responsible adviser of the Crown as to the legality of all general courts-martial held in the United Kingdom."

He did not know that Mr. Milvain had been sworn of the Privy Council. He was told that Mr. Milvain had been appointed by Letters Patent. Prior to 1870 it might be said that the British Army was peculiar to a class. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Cardwell when they abolished purchase made it the possession of the nation. They made it what it was now, the people's Army, fighting the battles of the people, consisting of people paid by the people through their representatives in the House of Commons. The War Office was the natural enemy of the soldier; this House was his natural friend, for the soldier, however humble his rank, looked to this House in the last resort, being not merely a soldier but a free-born Englishman, Scotchman, or Irishman, as a sure defence and shield, and they would be unworthy of their past traditions and the people who sent them to Parliament if they allowed the soldier to be deprived of the right, and if they allowed themselves tamely to be divested of the powers which had been entrusted to them. He was afraid that the War Office had been playing upon the innocence of his right hon. friend. They had put some strange ideas into his head, which he had faithfully communicated to the House. They told him that Mr. Milvain was a permanent member of the Civil Service, but he was not. If he were he would be entitled to a pension, and he was not so entitled. They had told his right hon. friend that the constitution of this office had been altered in accordance with the Report of the Esher Committee. He had studied that Report, and he had not found any recommendation that the office should be changed or any recommendation on the subject at all. He maintained that the Judge Advocate-General by the law and constitution of this country was a member of the Executive Government, that he held office by precisely the same tenure as Sir Robert Finlay when he was Attorney-General, and the right hon. and learned Member for Trinity College, and that he ought to have gone out with the late Government. The same power which appointed him could dismiss him, and if the Secretary of State for War was wise he would humbly advise his Majesty to revoke these Letters Patent before the House met again. They wanted the Judge Advocate-General in this House. They wanted to go back to the old system. It might be a Conservative principle, but it was one in favour of liberty; it protected the soldier and it ought to be revived. It was a principle which, he submitted, no adequate power existed, except Parliament, to alter in any degree. Having, since he last spoke conditionally on this matter, further examined it, he now said without condition that the appointment of Mr. Milvain was a scandalous job. It was carefully concealed from the late House, and was made at least three weeks before that House was prorogued for ever. It was a serious matter that this appointment should be taken up and defended by the present Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman was a high prerogative man. He might have been a Tory Minister in the days of the Stuarts. When asked the other day who would have the power of dismissing Mr. Milvain he said "His Majesty." Was ever such an answer given to a Member of Parliament before? He did not know whether it was in order, but it was certainly unconstitutional. The right hon. Gentleman might think that, surrounded by the military geniuses of the Army Council and the financial geniuses of the War Office, he could wipe his boots on the House of Commons; but he doubted very much whether he would find this House quite so passive and convenient a door-mat as the late Prime Minister found its predecessor. He would venture upon the prediction that if the right hon. Gentleman tried a fall with the House of Commons it was not the House of Commons that would go down.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that he had considerable sympathy with the attack which had been made on the appointment of Mr. Milvain. It was made in September, 1905. Quite apart from the circumstances surrounding this particular appointment, he agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton that a grave constitutional question arose. He did not think his hon. friend had used too strong a word when he said that the appointment in the circumstances was a scandal. When the appointment was made the Government of the day were tottering to their fall, and they, when Parliament was not sitting and when they could not be questioned on the matter, changed the position of Judge Advocate-General; they undertook that they had power to appoint him for life. His right hon. friend the Secretary for War was not responsible for the appointment. He hoped the House would not think that he was making any personal attack upon Mr. Milvain, who had been a Member of this House for many years, who was well known to most hon. Members, and against whose capacity and ability they had nothing whatever to say. What they had a right to complain of was that the late Government had made this appointment, and they had also a right to call upon the present Government to give an explanation of how they viewed that appointment. The present Attorney-General, the First Law Officer of the Crown, made a speech on this matter in the House on March 17th, 1904, from which he would quote one or two passages, as he believed that they would carry great weight. The present Attorney-General then said—

> "The general proposition he should invite the House to accept was that the post of Judge Advocate-General ought to be held by someone who was not merely a Minister of the Crown, responsible to the Crown, but who was also directly responsible to Parliament for the discharge of the duties of the office. The subject had been considered by Committees of that House in 1860, 1868, and 1888, and expressions of opinion had been given with reference to the character of the office, the nature of its duties, and the qualifications of the officer selected to discharge those duties. It was now clear that the Judge Advocate-General was a Minister of the Crown responsible to the Sovereign for the discharge of the duties attaching to his office, and that he held the office of a Privy Councillor in order that he might give advice personally to the King. He was responsible to no other person, and the advice which he gave was given entirely upon his own responsibility. He was not responsible to any one connected with the War Office. He advised entirely upon his own responsibility, being guided solely by his conscientious view of the duties he had to discharge."

There was one other short passage he would quote—

> "His contention was that an official holding such a position ought not to be left responsible only in an indirect and vague way to that House, and that he ought to acknowledge the same measure of responsibility which was acknowledged by every other Minister of the Crown who gave direct advice to the Sovereign and who was responsible for that advice. . . . It was a primary rule of the Constitution."

That was the rule which they contended had been in this case broken—

> "that every Minister of State who advised the Sovereign should be directly responsible to this House for the advice he gave. That rule was essential for the protection of the Sovereign and for the efficient administration of all the Departments of the State."

That was the opinion expressed by the present Attorney-General, which he thought ought to be taken to heart by every Member of this House who believed in adhering to these excellent constitutional principles. His hon. friend in calling attention to this matter had put the case in a perfectly clear manner as to what the constitutional law really was in regard to the matter. But he would refer to what was said by that great constitutional authority, Mr. Clode, in his latest book on this subject. In that book Mr. Clode said—

> "The proceedings of all general courts-martial, of which the Government is the confirming officer, are sent direct to the Judge Advocate-General for his examination and approval. If they are confirmed, it is upon his responsibility as a Minister of the Crown, for which he would be accountable to Parliament. In these cases the persons under sentence lose their legal remedy against the Government as confirming officer, but hold one against the Minister in Parliament. The duty of the Judge Advocate-General is confined to an examination into the legality of the proceedings, the validity of the charges, the evidence of guilt, and the sentence with referencet o statute law. The expediency of carrying out the sentence, or of extending mercy, does not come within his province. In the former matters, no one stands between him and Parliament—he bears the responsibility alone."

He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Nottingham that the soldier had to be protected against the ordinary Army official. It had been said of persons of eminent position who had held the office of Judge Advocate-General that it was essential that that official, while responsible to Parliament, should be independent of the officials at the War Office. In the Report of the Select Committee on the Army Estimates for 1868 it was stated that that Committee was strenuous in urging that the Judge Advocate-General should be independent of the War Office officials, and also of the Secretary for War. In these circumstances he thought that his hon. friend the Member for Nottingham was doing a great service to our soldiers, and also performing a solemn duty to Parliament, in bringing the attention of the House to this matter. He did not know whether Mr. Milvain would care to submit himself for election again to any constituency; but the principle which they were urging was that the office ought to be held by a person who was directly responsible to the House of Commons, and they thought that the Government had to give a stronger justification than they had yet done for holding the same views as their predecessors who had perpetrated the scandal of the appointment of Mr. Milvain. They were confronted by the fact that in 1892, he thought on the recommendation of the present Prime Minister, Sir Francis Jeune, afterwards Lord St. Helier, was asked to perform the duties of the Judge Advocate-General.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Temporarily.

Mr. SAMUEL EVANS said he supposed that the right hon. Gentleman then took the line of least resistance, but as a matter of fact Sir Francis Jeune continued to hold the office for some years. He did not suppose that anyone would care to suggest that the duties of the office of Judge Advocate-General were not absolutely fairly performed by that eminent Judge; but it might be possible that other people who held the position would not be as high-minded, as able, and as honourable. All these considerations, however, did not change the opinion which he and his friends held, that the office of Judge Advocate-General ought to be held by a Minister of the Crown who had a right to approach the Sovereign himself; and that the only way in which they could touch the advice which the Minister gave to his Sovereign was by calling him to account in the House of Commons.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) said that his hon. and learned friend had stated his case in the temperate fashion which might have been expected from one conversant with affairs. The points to which reference had been made were serious points; and he met them not as one who had the slightest interest in prerogative or high doctrine, but simply as a public servant responsible to the House of Commons, whose desire and business it was to do the best for the soldiers in his charge. There were a large number of courts-martial which often required careful supervision as regarded not only the evidence, but the sentences, and the whole of the proceedings, and the work was so heavy that it was the work of one man of considerable capacity. Up to 1894 the office had continued on its old footing, and the practice had been for Government to regard it as an office which they could fill up, not always from the ranks of lawyers of special capacity or even from the ranks of lawyers at all, but as a reward for political services. Accordingly the Government of 1894 found themselves justified as a temporary measure in departing from the practice of having the Judge-Advocate-General in the House of Commons, in order to appoint a man of distinguished legal ability. Lord St. Helier was, of course, a Privy Councillor—a circumstance which seemed to afford considerable gratification to the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. PAUL: He was also independent of the War Office.

Mr. HALDANE said that he certainly was not responsible to the House of Commons. Lord St. Helier filled that office longer than was intended and the arrangement went on for twelve years. The noble Lord was assisted by various competent assistants, including Sir C. Scott and Mr. O'Dowd, but he thought that the work was done mainly by a clerk of considerable eminence at the War Office who advised Lord St. Helier upon the work which had to be done. Lord St. Helier spared no pains, but, busy man as he was, he could not give to the duties the attention they required. Any one who knew the work would understand that the examination of proceedings of courts-martial and the sifting of evidence required day by day a man's whole time. For twelve years there had been no one holding the office who was responsible to the House of Commons, though the work was admirably done under an eminent Judge, who could not, with his other duties, himself do the work in the thorough fashion required. In this state of things, and while the organisation of the War Office was being inquired into by the Esher Committee, the office of Judge Advocate-General, with other matters, came under review. The Committee dealt with the office in Part 3 of their Report, and recommended the appointment of a qualified man who would give his whole time and undivided attention to the work. In substance the recommendation of the Committee was carried out, and, as was explained by the late Secretary of State for War in debate in July last,† the precedent of the Navy was followed, and for the first time for twelve years there was somebody in the House responsible for the treatment of the soldier—the Secretary of State for War. Who was responsible before? Did his hon. friend contend that the Secretary of State for War was responsible for the acts of Lord St. Helier?

MR. PAUL: Most certainly.

MR. HALDANE said that Lord St. Helier had direct access to the Sovereign as a Privy Councillor, and, therefore, he was not responsible to the head of the War Department. For twelve years there was no person responsible to this House and that was the reason why it was thought necessary to make somebody responsible. The Judge Advocate-General had his office and his department and reported to the Secretary of State every day and the Secretary of State had the responsibility and was responsible to this House.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS inquired how it had come about that the right hon. Gentleman was responsible in this House for the acts of the Judge Advocate-General.

MR. HALDANE replied that that responsibility arose simply from the fact that the Judge Advocate-General was an official of the War Office and reported to the Secretary of State, who could control him. The Judge Advocate-General was appointed by Letters Patent, which were issued under the advice of the Secretary of State for War and could be recalled by the Secretary of State. Therefore the Judge Advocate-General was responsible to the Secretary of State who appointed him. If any doubts arose he (the Secretary of State) went over the Papers, and there was the advantage of two minds reviewing the proceedings. He was not concerned to defend the change that was made; he found the arrangement in operation. Expense should not be considered in a question affecting the lives and liberties of soldiers or anybody else, but, assuming that the arrangement was more or equally efficient, the question of expense was not irrelevant. Under the old arrangement there was a Minister with a salary of £2,000 and a seat in the House, and there was necessarily a salary for a deputy. Now the work was done for one salary and the holder of the office was responsible to the Secretary of State. He did not think the soldier was better off under the old arrangement. He did not initiate the change—perhaps he would not have done so; he could not say; he might have found himself under the domination of more conservative ideas. But he did find in operation an arrangement founded on the recommendation of one of the most competent Committees of modern times. He was not responsible for Mr. Milvain's selection, but he did know that that gentleman carried out the duties of the office with great industry and ability and in a manner that left nothing to be desired. Mr. Milvain was appointed on the understanding that he would not receive a pension and, subject to competence, might hold office until he reached seventy years of age. It was perfectly within the competence of the House to change this position, to dismiss Mr. Milvain, and to revert to the old arrangement; but for the reasons which he had submitted he doubted whether by reverting to the old plan the House would get anything like so good an arrangement as the present one, under which it had a man giving his whole time to the work, and in addition the advantage, not only of the Secretary of State's supervision of the work, but of his direct responsibility to the House of Commons.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlviii., 1447–8.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that among the many questions concerning South Africa which the House had been regarding of late there was one which, he thought, was well removed from anything like political controversy. That particular question was raised by his hon. friend the Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire last week, and he would not have raised it to-day but for the fact that on Thursday last he was unable, owing to the lateness of the hour, to discuss this question of land settlement, in which he was particularly interested. Naturally in the discussion of land settlement in South Africa the question of Lord Milner's administration came up. Whatever view might be held by Members on the Ministerial side of the House, it was quite clear all would agree that with regard to land settlement Lord Milner's policy was on the right lines; his whole endeavour was one which all would approve, namely, to put British settlers upon the land acquired by the Crown after tremendous sacrifice on the part of the nation. Lord Milner's policy with regard to land settlement would bear the very closest examination. His Lordship himself had said when he projected his scheme for land settlement that naturally there must be in some respects a certain amount of failure, since it was an experiment in absolutely new conditions under the gravest disabilities, when the whole country was devastated and the Boers had to be put back upon their own farms or upon new farms where their own had been burnt, while at the same time there was a great number of discharged soldiers and others, concerning whom the Press of this country and of South Africa demanded that something should be done. Therefore, a large burden of relief was put upon the land settlement department. He ventured to say that the problem of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony never would be solved until there had been placed upon the soil of those Colonies a progressive agricultural community. It was only by such settlement that there could be built up really self-contained Colonies. At the present time the greater part of the food consumed in South Africa was imported from abroad. That was not wholly due to the country itself, but it was largely due to the fact that the old Dutch methods of farming were not progressive, that South Africa had not yet realised its possibilities, that irrigation had played no large part in the agricultural development, that pest and disease had handicapped the Boers, who had not fought disease nor made scientific efforts to eradicate pests. The points he wished to raise this afternoon were two, and he addressed himself to the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who in this matter, he was sure, was particularly sympathetic. He could imagine that the Government felt as strongly as he or anyone else interested in South Africa did, that if they could do anything, without doing wrong to the Dutch, to develop agricultural settlement in the new Colonies it ought to be done. The proposal he made to the Under-Secretary, and through him to the Colonial Secretary, was that a certain sum of money which had already been allocated to land settlement in South Africa should be kept for that purpose in perpetuity. Three millions of money were set apart out of the £35,000,000 loan for the purpose of land settlement in South Africa. Of that sum £2,266,000 had been spent. It was said by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Chippenham Division that it had not all been wisely spent. He would ask the House to consider whether it was a bad business that under circumstances of great pressure, when they were called upon to do something for a floating population without work and after war, a sum of about £200,000 should have been lost out of the £2,266,000? What he was asking for was that the Government should sympathetically consider the possibility of devoting the £600,000 which was still left to be expended in land settlement, and also the repayments from 1,300 settlers, who had been placed on the land since 1901, to the purchase of land again, so that from year to year there would be always some land purchased and placed at the disposal of settlers from this country. The House must dismiss from its mind the idea that the £2,266,000 was given to the settlers. The money was advanced to them and was being paid back. He had been accused in this House of not paying sufficient attention to the needs of the men in this country, and that if the Chinese had not been introduced Britishers would have found work in the mines. If it were thought that he had been wrong in advocating Chinese labour under the circumstances, at any rate on the present question he surely had the cordial good-will of all in the House. He would ask the Under-Secretary if the Government had made inquiry, and whether it was possible to allocate the £3,000,000 of money in perpetuity for the purchase of land which should be at the disposal of emigrants from this country to become settlers in the new Colonies. He asked the House to remember—and he said it without any prejudice to Boer fellow-subjects in South Africa—that Boer policy in the future under self-government would be to keep the land in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony as preserves for the Dutch, whose preference was for large areas, whereas the British idea of farming was to have smaller holdings and more intensive culture. He hoped if these £3,000,000 were set apart for the purpose mentioned there would be increased intensive culture, irrigation on close settlements, with which he felt the Under-Secretary was in sympathy. If his hon. friend could hold out some hope that the £3,000,000 could be, as it were, turned over in perpetuity for that purpose, he believed considerable progress would be achieved in making our Boer fellow-subjects our friends, for the man who went to market brought back with him good fellowship, and if they had British subjects living side by side with the Boers in an agricultural community this would tend to the destruction of racial feuds; the British would learn something from the Dutch, and the Boer would imbibe better ideas of farming, of government, and of social order. He made this plea on behalf of Boer and Briton alike. If what he suggested were not carried out they would find in the new Colonies as was once the case with Canada, that isolated communities of one race, and particularly a race devoted to pastoral pursuits, would by their very nature prevent progress. Only to-day, after 150 years, had the solidarity of the French in Canada been invaded, and they were becoming a commercial community. In South Africa there was a better hope for the Transvaal as a commercial community, and if they only put on the soil agricultural settlers of the right stamp in the Orange River Colony particularly he believed the future of the two Colonies would be one that would make for the security of British institutions in South Africa. He went one step further, and made another proposition, which he did not press, although it was a matter which the House ought to consider. There had been occasions on which the Crown had reserved Crown lands in giving constitutional government. This had been done in French Canada, where land had been reserved for the Catholic clergy, and in English Canada, where land had been reserved for the clergy of the English Church. He did not say that that particular arrangement was a good one. He mentioned it only as a precedent established for reserving Crown lands when a constitution was given to a Colony. His suggestion was that the reservation of Crown lands for ten years in these Colonies might be considered. In the Orange River Colony there was little or no Crown land, but in the Transvaal there were 36,000 square miles, and if this were reserved for ten years and administered by the Colonial Office they would be certain to lift the administration of those lands above anything like mismanagement, but above all, keep the question of land settlement out of the arena of Party conflict, prevent it from being a source of warfare between races. They knew there had been maladministration of the Crown lands at times in other Colonies and that under the Kruger Government there was the grossest maladministration of those lands. This proposal, if accepted, might secure land settlement under the present Boards which had proved so successful, and do as good work for the new Colonies as for this country. If the Government set apart the £3,000,000 under a permanent Commission in perpetuity to encourage British settlers to go to South Africa, to buy land for them, which they would purchase in turn, a nucleus of British-Dutch citizenship, combining the characteristics of both peoples, would be secured in the two Colonies. He had been making a speech of suggestion, and he hoped it would receive the sympathetic consideration of His Majesty's Government. It was no use attempting to keep from a Colony any of its rights, but the administration of the £3,000,000 he had alluded to belonged to this country, and it ought to be utilised for the benefit of our own people primarily, while it would be a steady influence upon the future of our great new territories.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) drew attention to the state of elementary education in the Island of Ceylon, pointing out that the children of the coolies had no form of education provided for them, while elementary education generally was in a backward state. There were 60,000 or 100,000 children in Ceylon who were receiving no education, and he thought that steps should be taken to give them at least simple instruction in reading and arithmetic. No one believed that it was necessary to burden each estate with a school, for it would be easy to group four or five estates at no great expense to the planters. He wanted to know what steps had been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Elementary Education Commission of 1905, with respect to compulsory education in Ceylon, whether a conscience clause would be included in the new proposals, when legislation was likely to be introduced, and whether inspectors were to be appointed for existing schools on all estates. He hoped the Under-Secretary for the Colonies would be able to give a satisfactory reply as to what provision was going to be for the education of the children of all classes in Ceylon.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I think that the House would desire that I should expedite matters by replying to the Questions put to me by the hon. Member for North Manchester and the hon. Member for Gravesend. With reference to the Question just put to me by the hon. Member for North Manchester as to education in Ceylon, the Report of the Commission has been already presented to Parliament. Lord Elgin has enjoyed the opportunity of considering the recommendations made by the Governor, and the Colonial Secretary has sent a despatch to the Governor approving the recommendations made by him. In consequence an Ordinance has been drafted which is now before the Colonial Legislature, and which gives power to municipalities and local boards to provide facilities for elementary vernacular education. Further legislation for increasing the facilities in the country districts is still in contemplation. That is a matter of greater difficulty. With regard to the estate schools, it is proposed that the planters be required to provide facilities for the simple instruction of the children of coolies employed on their estates, and it is intended that those schools should be inspected under Government auspices. But it is not intended at the present juncture to force on the estate schools a uniform, hard-and-fast compulsory school attendance. That would, I think, be going a little beyond what public opinion would support at the present time; but I would like to say that there is no indication that the planters do not recognise in a very full and sympathetic spirit the responsibility which they have in the matter of the education of the children of the coolies who are in their employment. In 1903 there were only forty-three estate schools in the island, of which two were Government schools, and forty-one aided schools. In 1905 there were fifty-eight aided schools and two Government schools, and in the schools examined the number of pupils was 2,139, of whom 1,936 were males and 203 females. My hon. friend will see that that is a substantial advance. The question of grouping the estates for the purposes of education has also been very much discussed and examined. As my hon. friend is aware, it has encountered some hostile criticism and opposition, but it would appear that it is possible to group the estates for education facilities without grouping them for all other purposes. The idea of grouping estates for that purpose has not been abandoned by the Governor of Ceylon, and he will do his best to facilitate an extension of that system. I have only, I think, to add that the proposal has in view the issue of a general syllabus of instruction for all the schools throughout the island. That has not yet been completed, because no doubt our educational arrangements in Ceylon, although I think more advanced than a good many hon. Gentlemen here this afternoon might perhaps have imagined, are nevertheless in a somewhat rudimentary condition. I hope, however, that I have explained to my hon. friend that the matter is being closely and vigilantly watched from day to day by the Colonial Office. I hope that the very valuable Report of the Commission which lately investigated the whole question will certainly not be allowed to become useless and ineffective, but that the legislation to which it gave rise will be pushed through the Legislative Council without unnecessary delay.

Now I come to what was said by my hon. friend the Member for Gravesend, who in this House takes such a very great interest in South African questions and indeed in almost all questions we have opportunities for discussing. My hon. friend has asked me about land settlement in South Africa. He is no doubt aware that the whole of the £3,000,000 originally earmarked for that purpose has not been spent, because, when £2,352,000 had been spent on land settlement, it was found that the demands on the loan of £35,000,000, which had been made for the purpose of repatriating the Boers and helping them to get to work on their farms, had been greater than the Government originally anticipated, and that the funds which had been expected to be available for land settlement were, temporarily though not permanently, alienated by having been lent for more urgent needs, to enable people to get to work, to rebuild their houses, and to till the soil again after the war. I think it was explained by Sir Arthur Lawley to the Council of the Transvaal that it was quite impossible until a greater proportion of the money which had been advanced had been repaid for the whole sum required for repatriation to be expended. That was the decision which Lord Milner and the late Administration in the Transvaal were reluctantly compelled to come to. As the hon. Member knows, Lord Milner was one of the most ardent advocates of land settlement, and the fact that he had alienated from the ear-marked fund the sum of £600,000 showed how very clear were the reasons and how imperative was the necessity which deprived the land settlement fund of that sum. The question is—What are we to do in the future? Before that sum of money is repaid and recovered the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal will have become responsible self-governing Colonies. The hon. Gentleman himself is a very strong advocate of the great principle of self-government, and he is always ready to condemn the slightest infraction or fancied infraction of the principle. Above all, he is always ready to condemn any assumption of anything like superior knowledge on the part of Ministers in Downing Street over our colonial fellow subjects in South Africa. Therefore I heard with some surprise the hon Member recommend us to place Crown lands under special reservation in order to prevent "boodling" or corruption on the part of the persons to whom the government will be entrusted. I really think my hon. friend must be very careful. He does not know what susceptibilities he may be injuring by all this kind of loose talk, which may be telegraphed so swiftly to South Africa and which may be read in South Africa by some who may not fully understand the benevolent motives which have led him to say such things. I do not think that the Government can have any policy in regard to the Crown lands except that of trusting the new administration which will be called into being in the Transvaal. When self-government is established and is representative, as it will be, of all the forces in the country —fairly and evenly representative of them—it will be our duty to confide to them the working out of their own fortunes and destinies, and I do not think we can make innumerable reservations that would excite against this country and the Ministers in charge a great amount of prejudice and even irritation and resentment in the Colonies concerned.

*Sir GILBERT PARKER said the suggestion he made was not in regard to the prevention of boodling and corruption in the new Colonies. What he said was that there had been boodling and corruption in the Kruger Administration, and that land settlement might well be kept free from any opposing views of Parties for the present.

Mr. CHURCHILL: If the suggestion of "boodling" and corruption in the past had nothing to do with the proposal to reserve the Crown lands, I do not see how it was necessary to bring it into the discussion at all. I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not wish, any more than any other Member of the House, to give offence to any portion of the British Empire. In regard to land settlement, that is a matter which, as I have already said on behalf of the Government, we view with great sympathy. Lord Elgin has stated in the House of Lords that he would carefully consider any scheme which might be presented upon that subject, but he has also said he could not give a definite pledge that the whole of this sum would be made available, because before that sum becomes available the new Government will be in being in the Transvaal. Land settlement is not a matter which is being overlooked. The Committee which is proceeding to South Africa will, among other questions, consider whether it is not possible to interpose some sort of screen between the mortgagor and the mortgagee so that the new settlers shall not be dispossessed by the consequences of bad seasons and other natural uncertainties. I hope the hon. Gentleman is not offended at the remarks I have ventured to make. I shall ask him to be content for the present with that assurance. He may be certain that the debate which he has initiated has not been without use. It will tend to crystallise opinion upon the question of land settlement. On both sides of the House there is a good deal of sympathy with the hon. Member's view, and that sympathy is strongly felt by Lord Elgin and the Government.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said the President of the Local Government Board had admitted, in Answer to a Question, that the central body acting in London under the Unemployed Workmen Act was about to suspend active operations except in regard to emigration and some other minor matters. He was aware that the Act empowered the central body to suspend its operations. That could only mean that the provisions of the Act should be suspended when there was no longer any need for their being applied. That could not be said to be the case at the present time. He had been informed that the total number of persons applying in the London area alone was nearly 40,000, and the number for whom work had been found was 4,000. At the present time there were hundreds of women who had made application for whom no sort of provision had been made. The central body at its last meeting had a motion before it to make some provision for some unemployed women, but the motion had to be dropped because the central body had practically decided to suspend all operations under the Act except those relating to emigration and some small settlements in land colonies in this country. This was a very serious matter. It did not apply to London alone, but to Swansea, Manchester, Newcastle, and Leicester. He would press on the President of the Local Government Board that his Department should insist on those bodies carrying out the limited powers conferred upon them under the Act as long as the necessity existed for its being done. The present Act had, as was expected, failed to meet the necessities of the unemployed difficulty, and it had been found in practice that the powers of the distress committees were altogether too limited. Therefore, he thought they were entitled to ask when the Bill mentioned in the King's Speech to extend these powers was likely to be introduced.

The unemployed had been awaiting anxiously the fulfilment of the promises made by the new Government preceding and during the general election. He had had letters from all over the country on the subject, and his reply had invariably been that the Government should be given an opportunity of showing what they could do in the way of enforcing the present Act. It must not, however, he assumed that because there were no processions of the unemployed or other demonstrations that unemployment no longer existed in London and in every large centre of population. There were literally tens of thousands of men, women, and children at the present moment destitute for lack of employment, and he insisted that all the powers which the law conferred upon these authorities should be used to the fullest extent, and that at the earliest possible moment those powers should be enlarged.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said he would support the appeal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Merthyr, especially in regard to the promises of the Government to bring forward at the earliest possible moment a measure to amend the Unemployment Act. It seemed to him that such an amending Bill was entitled to precedence, in point of time, over all other legislation promised by the Government. The Education Bill, for instance, was not to come into operation until January 1st, 1908; but this amending Bill would be required in view of the necessities of the coming winter. What he was afraid of was that the present Government were going to repeat the old mistake of bringing in an inadequate Bill. The appointment of the central committees was defective in the matter of their composition, and they were brought into existence too late to cope efficiently with the distress which existed. The difficulty was that the stress was always laid upon organisations for the relief of unemployment before any preparation had been made to encounter it. They muddled through one winter, but they were in the same difficulty when the necessities of the next winter came upon them. He hoped the Government would bring in their amending Bill forthwith. The Government had been in office for three months and this was a question which must have occupied the minds of the Local Government Board, as it had occupied the minds of all the London Members for years past. It was not, therefore, unreasonable to press the Government to bring forward their amending Bill immediately after the House resumed after the Easter recess.

MR. BROOKE (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley) said that he represented a large constituency where the whole problem of unemployment was very acute. They recognised that there had been a very great improvement in trade in many places, but that improvement had not yet reached Bow and Bromley and Poplar. He hoped that there were better times before his constituents in that regard, but that time had not yet come. They saw that the Unemployed Act had practically proved a failure in operation. In Poplar there were from 3,000 to 5,000 men unemployed, and only 2,000 had registered themselves. And of these 2,000, only 200 had received employment under the Unemployed Committee. Every man who had had to do with the unemployed knew what a vast vista of distress that showed. They believed that the central committees had the possibility of doing permanent work in this direction; but so long as those committees existed the councils did less and less to forward the means of providing work for the unemployed. What was wanted was to ask the Government to come to the aid of the central committees, and to encourage them to relieve the distress in London and in every part of the country. Why should not the Government subsidise the work of the central committees independently of voluntary subscriptions?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea) said that the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had asked him to amplify the Answer which he had given to a Question put by him that afternoon, and he gladly responded to that request.† The total number of applicants for work in London under the operation of the Central Unemployed Committee up to the end of March was 34,071, and the total number who had been given work up to date was 4,500. A large number had also secured employment from and through other authorities, and it was very probable many of these were men who registered themselves under the auspices of the Central Unemployed Body. The hon. Member had spoken of the number of women out of employment, and he need not say that he was exceedingly sympathetic in that regard. The hon. Member knew that he had received a deputation from unemployed women and of members of the Central Body who were specially interested in their unfortunate sisters. His reply to that deputation was that there were special difficulties in providing work for women, but that all he could do he had done, and anything further he could do he would do. There was nothing more pathetic than an unemployed woman; she was even more deserving of assistance than an unemployed man. At all times he could assure the hon. Member that the ladies, whether married or not, could command him for any service he could do for them. The hon. Member for S.W. Bethnal Green had joined the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil in complaining about the tardiness with which the distress committees had got to work. The hon. Member was a fair man, and admitted that the Local Government Board was not responsible for that or for other defects in the Act. It was a fact that the central committee was late in getting to work, but everything he could do to facilitate the work and to provide funds—going sometimes outside strict departmental duties—had been done. In many cases committees were slow in making use of the funds at their disposal, and he knew of one district where not a penny of £6,000 sent by the Queen's Unemployed Fund some months ago had been spent. In stimulating committees, in providing funds, in using the regulations without red tape, he had done everything he could to assist the working of the Act; he had done what he could to make a good coat out of a bad pair of trousers. The hon. Member for Bow and Bromley had said that the Act had been an absolute failure. That was a significant statement coming from Bow and Poplar, but London had received £62,000, and of that amount £34,000 was earmarked by the donors for London, and £28,000 was London's share from the general Unemployed Fund. Of the £62,000 received by the Central Unemployed Body £22,000 was in hand at the present moment, and the organisation was open to criticism for holding such a large balance; he would try to get it disbursed in wages to those recipients who were entitled to it. The hon. Member for Bow and Bromley had referred also to the distress in Poplar. On February 17th, 1906, that union had 7,128 persons receiving outdoor relief apart from those relieved by the committee, and on March 31st the recipients of outdoor relief were reduced to 5,492, and this diminution of 1,636, mainly able-bodied men, in six weeks was a step towards those better times the hon. Member wished for, and which he sincerely hoped were on the eve of being reached. It was not yet possible to bring forward an amending Bill. The Act had only three or four months' operation, and until it had had a fair trial the extent to which it was faulty could not be determined. A considerable portion of the funds was unexpended, and up to the present he had no official reports from distress committees as to the working of the Act. He was far from blaming the officers of the organisations, and especially wished to recognise the zeal and ability shown by the secretary of the Queen's Unemployed Fund. No man could have devoted more energy to his work; but until reports were received and suggestions considered a Bill to amend the Act would be incomplete. He had asked for reports, and one or two had appeared, and he hoped to visit a good many of the works and collect *data* to assist in the amendment of a difficult and complex Act. He would be glad to have the company of his hon. friends the Members for Bethnal Green and Merthyr on his motor-car journey. He could give no date for the introduction of such a Bill. Already there were before the House a large number of legislative projects in which the working classes were keenly interested—the Workmen's Compensation Bill, the Merchant Shipping Bill, the Trade Disputes Bill, and others—but as soon as was consistent with good work the amendment of the Unemployed Act would be undertaken.

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† See Column 1304.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) said he wished to call the attention of the House to a matter connected with the administration of the Congo, but as the day was far spent he did not propose to take up much time. The matter he wished to call attention to was the arrest of Mr. Stannard who had taken a great interest in the administration of the Congo and had been one of our most reliable informants as to the treatment of natives. Through him the reports of certain unfortunate proceedings had reached this country. Mr. Stannard had made certain representations to the Foreign Office and to the public about the treatment of natives by the Congo Government, but more especially by the rubber company, who was more responsible for the Government of the Congo apparently than the official Government itself. In 1903 and 1904 Mr. Stannard and his colleagues complained about the treatment of natives in the district where they were stationed. The result of these complaints was the appointment of a Commission of inquiry in 1904, and that Commission, as the result of investigations honestly carried out, supported in the main every statement and charge that Mr. Stannard and his colleagues had made against the administration of the Congo. Several servants of the rubber company were arrested and punished, but unfortunately several others, including the director-general, were allowed to leave the country in a somewhat unaccountable manner. The Congo Government said they invited further investigations and promised reforms, and some of them believed at the time that a very black—he had almost said disgraceful—page in the history of the treatment of natives by European countries was about to be closed. Mr. Stannard and his colleagues immediately began to find out that these hopes were not well founded. The Foreign Secretary would bear him out when he said that from May last year until October, and he might almost say until the present moment, the Foreign Office had been the recipient of a long series of letters bringing complaint after complaint about the administration of the Congo in respect to the natives. It had been informed that prominent witnesses who appeared before the first Commission of Inquiry had been arrested, deported, and smuggled out of existence. It had been informed that a series of elaborate molestations organised by responsible officials of the rubber company had taken place, that the tribute of rubber had been increased rather than diminished, and that the abominable system of hostages had been continued since the promulgation of the reforms on paper just as much as before. It had been informed that large wide-spreading drives had been instituted for the purpose of bringing in natives into the hostage houses so that their relatives might be more efficient instruments in the hands of the rubber company in collecting rubber. As a consequence of these things having happened after the reforms were promulgated, Mr. Stannard made a representation to the Governor-General, in which he said that on January 16th last additional State officers had come into the district, but instead of protecting the people and administering justice they were perpetrating the evils complained of; they had become mere rubber hunters and were using their authority and armed force to that end. After the Governor-General received that complaint from Mr. Stannard he promulgated a new law of libel which contained, amongst other provisions, one that anyone making a calumnious denunciation of the officials would be subject to a fine of from 25 to 1,000 francs and a maximum of five years imprisonment. That law was promulgated after Mr. Stannard's so-called calumnious statement, although all, or practically all, the statements made by Mr. Stannard had been proved to be true. When Mr. Stannard made the statements for which presumably he had been arrested, whether they were calumnious or not, at any rate they were not criminal, because the criminal law of libel was not then in existence. He should like to ask the Foreign Secretary whether he had any precise information upon this subject. Had Mr. Stannard been arrested under this law or had he not? As it would be some little time before the House met again, some statement ought to be made to re-assure the House on this point. He would venture to press the Foreign Secretary a little further, and to ask him whether, as a matter of fact, he did not consider that his duty and his responsibility compelled him to make representations to the proper authorities against the arrest of a British subject for such a crime under circumstances such as he had hurriedly detailed. There was another point. Mr. Stannard was to be brought before Courts about which the Commission of 1904 had stated their opinion definitely and precisely. According to the Commission of Inquiry the courts of the Congo were controlled by the executive of the Congo Government. If the surmises regarding the circumstances under which Mr. Stannard had been arrested were correct, it was because a member or an officer of the Executive of the Congo Government had been libelled, and yet the Court that was to try him had been declared to be subject to the orders of the Executive Government. They remembered the Stokes case, which Lord Fitzmaurice, when a Member of this House, described as murder. That trial was conducted by Courts which would now have to try Mr. Stannard. This was an exceedingly pressing matter in view of the approaching recess, and required the immediate attention of the Foreign Office. The other day there was a very instructive debate on the Congo in the Belgian Chamber, in the course of which it was indicated from all parts of the House that the time had come for the Belgian nation to make itself directly responsible for the administration of the Congo. He hoped the Foreign Secretary would be able to give assurances to the Belgian people that the British Foreign Office would welcome the transfer of the administration of the Congo from its present Government to the control of the whole Belgian nation.

*MR. GOOCH (Bath) called attention to the state of Macedonia, and asked from the Foreign Secretary a statement of the policy which His Majesty's Government were pursuing and intended to pursue in that country. The scheme which was put forward by Austria and Russia three years ago had simply added one more to the paper schemes of reform which the Sultan would not recognise. The civil assessors who had been appointed were a sort of glorified Consuls, for they had a high position but no power. The appointment of those assessors had not rendered the life of a single resident in Macedonia more safe. With reference to the *gendarmerie*, it was difficult to get them appointed at all, and the House was aware what limitations were put upon their powers. A demand was lately presented for a little more power to be given to them, and he should like to know whether any progress had been made in that direction. Up to last year very little had been done to make life safer, or to make the property of the peasants more secure. There was only one bright spot in the whole business, and that was the policy of Lord Lansdowne, although he thought at the beginning of his term of office Lord Lansdowne made one or two mistakes; or, at any rate, he took one or two steps which he personally regretted very much. He regretted that Lord Lansdowne ever allowed the Macedonian question to be taken over by Austria and Russia, and it would have been very much better if it had remained an international and European question. With those exceptions, Lord Lansdowne's policy had been exceedingly wise and statesmanlike. Not long ago Lord Lansdowne put forward his own scheme of reforms, which were contained in a Blue-book which had been placed before the present Parliament, and which he regarded as the charter of the hopes of the Macedonian people. He hoped very much that the Foreign Secretary would in no way recede from the demands put forward by Lord Lansdowne. Then there was the introduction of the financial control, and this question filled the largest space in the Blue-book. After the naval demonstration this financial control was whittled down until it would have very little effect indeed. The state of the country referred to in the Blue-book appeared to be as bad now as it was represented to be in the preceding Blue-book. He felt that all reform schemes in Macedonia must be tested by the degree in which they contributed to the improvement of the daily life of the peasants and their families. Reference was made in the Blue-book to the presence of Greek bands in Macedonia, and he hoped the Foreign Secretary would be able to say a word in regard to that matter. They carried on their unholy attacks and depredations, not only against barbarians, but also against the peaceful Vlachs who were the enemy of no man. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to assure the House that he had called the attention of the Greek Government to this matter. He further wished to know whether the *gendarmerie* were to get the increased powers which the Porte was asked for early in March; whether the sanction for the Budgets which had been drawn up by the Financial Commission had arrived from Constantinople; and whether anything had been done in regard to the important question of the raising of the Customs from 8 to 11 per cent. He believed he was right in saying that a reply had not yet been received in connection with the proposed increase. He hoped this country would receive assurances that the increased revenue which would flow from the Customs duties would not be used to increase the Turkish Army in Macedonia, and that they would be used to improve the condition of things in Macedonian territory. He hoped the Foreign Secretary would go on pressing the Lansdowne charter. He did not know whether the Foreign Secretary had in contemplation the resumption of diplomatic relations with Servia. Personally, he did not wish to offer any opinion on that subject, but he might say that he thought trade was suffering to a considerable extent from the non-resumption of diplomatic relations. There was one point about that country to which he wished to call attention. Last summer Servia and Bulgaria concluded a Customs union which, so far as he knew, did not alter their relations with Austria in the very least. Austria interfered, and by a process which he could only describe as bullying, forced Bulgaria to tear up, or drastically to modify, that instrument. He did not suppose that the British Government did anything to aid those two little Powers in carrying out a purely domestic concern. He expressed the hope that if anything happened again in the nature of a friendly movement between these old enemies—Servia and Bulgaria—we should do all we could to encourage such a valuable *rapprochement.* He had no desire to embarrass the Government by asking Questions which the Foreign Secretary might think it better not to answer, but it was well known that the Macedonian people looked to Britain more than to any other Power for further reforms and the improvement of their terrible condition.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I am afraid that at this hour I cannot attempt to review either the Macedonian question or the Congo question at great length. First of all, let me say as to Servia that I have nothing to add to the Answer I gave this afternoon to the Question asked by the hon. Member for Gravesend.† As to Macedonia, I will only ask my hon. friend who spoke last to let me endorse the speech made by Lord Fitzmaurice in another place.‡ That noble Lord spoke the other night on the question of Macedonia with a knowledge, an experience, and a zeal with which I am entirely in sympathy. On the general aspect of the question I will rely, owing to considerations of time, on the speech of Lord Fitzmaurice. With regard to the mischief which is being done with the Greek bands, we have made representations more than once at Athens, and it has been impressed on the Greek Government how desirable it is they should do all in their power to prevent those bands being formed and entering into Macedonia to work mischief there, and how unfavourable must be the impression produced on the public opinion of Europe if those bands continue to increase and cross over into Macedonia. As to the *gendarmerie*, there is no doubt they need more power. Their operations are hampered by the fact that they have not sufficient power, especially the right of intervening in the case of every crime committed whether by a private person or by an official in Macedonia. The Powers which have representatives at Constantinople have joined in pressing on the Porte that such power should be given. To their united request they have not yet had a reply, but the reply, when it comes, will, I trust, be what it certainly ought to be, satisfactory in the sense of conceding what is asked. With regard to the Budgets drawn up by the Financial Commission, I can give a more definite and satisfactory reply. They were presented to the Porte for an Iradé to be issued for the purpose. They were accepted without modification, and an Iradé has been issued in the last day or two. With regard to the increase in the Customs dues, his Majesty's Government have not seen their way yet to agree to that, because we wish to be sure before the dues are increased that the revenue which accrues from them will be adequately collected, and that the general prospect both with regard to trade and with regard to the provisions for the vilayets of Macedonia will be assured, or at any rate greatly improved, by the assent we may give eventually to the increase of the Customs dues. I endorse entirely what my hon. friend has said with regard to the earnestness of Lord Lansdowne. It is not a matter of policy with Lord Lansdowne, but a matter of earnest human desire to create some improvement in Macedonian affairs; and if he did not do all he hoped it was because of the necessary limitation put on his action by the fact that he had to co-operate with other Powers. My hon. friend expressed the hope that Adrianople would be included in the reforms. If it is not yet included it does not arise from any lack of pressure on Lord Lansdowne's part. It is because Lord Lansdowne was unable to get the consent of other Powers to join with him in securing that policy. I regard that as a point which it is desirable should still be pressed. Much remains to be done in Macedonia. Lord Lansdowne's work, valuable in some respects as it was and full of good intentions as it always has been, is not yet complete. I can assure my hon. friend that as opportunities offer and as we are able to get other Powers to go with us in this matter we will do our utmost to proceed on the same lines, and will keep in view the further reforms which have been laid down in Lord Lansdowne's despatch. I will not say anything about the Congo generally, having regard to the limitations of time. An action for libel has been brought against Mr. Stannard, and I assume that that is a civil action, but a report has reached this country, though it has not reached the Foreign Office, that Mr. Stannard has been arrested. If that be so, it would appear that he must have been arrested on a criminal charge, and the criminal charge must have been made under the law recently promulgated, and promulgated subsequently to Mr. Stannard's alleged offence. I have telegraphed to our Consul at Boma to ask whether Mr. Stannard has been arrested and to point out that if he has been arrested under this law it is clearly illegal that a law promulgated since the offence should be applied to Mr. Stannard's case. I sent that telegram last week, but I have not had a reply, and therefore I cannot say definitely whether Mr. Stannard has been arrested or not. As soon as I get the information I shall be in a position to act. With regard to the prospects of the trial, I am told that the Court before which Mr. Stannard is to be tried is composed of competent people. As soon as the Government heard that Mr. Stannard was to be tried we telegraphed to Vice-Consul Armstrong to attend the trial and to report to His Majesty's Government anything irregular or anything he might think ought to be brought to our notice. I thoroughly endorse what the hon. Member for Leicester has said about the value of Belgian public opinion with reference to the Congo Free State. There is no desire whatever on the part of His Majesty's Government to minimise Belgian responsibility. On the contrary, we want to see Belgium take the responsibility. Not only have we no jealousy, but we have every desire that through Belgian public opinion pressure should be brought to bear to secure reform of the state of affairs in the Congo, and I believe that Belgium, with the right to look upon the Congo as a prospective colony, is the proper country to assert responsibility there. The more the Belgians assert their responsibility the more pleased His Majesty's Government will be. I can assure the House, not only on the part of the Government, but also on the part of the public opinion of this country, that we are entirely disinterested. Our interest is not in the least national, but purely humanitarian, and every one who takes an interest in the Congo question would welcome cordially any disposition on the part of the Belgian nation to take the matter into their own hands.

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† See Col. 1302.

‡ See Col. 867, *et seq.*

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said he would stand only for a moment between the House and the adjournment, but he wished to call attention to the position of the Congested Districts Boards in Scotland. The present position showed the different aspects of the land question in different parts of the country. Apparently there was no desire in Scotland on the part of the people in the districts controlled by the Board to become owners. The Congested Districts Board had acquired land which they were unable to dispose of to the occupiers, and he wished to give that Board full power as owners of the land to deal with it as owners, to borrow money upon it, and so put them in a freer financial position. As to finances, under the equivalent grant Scotland received something over £200,000 a year, and under the further grant of £1,000,000 for education to be given under the Bill introduced the other day, they would have an additional proportionate grant for Scotland amounting to over £100,000. His desire was that the Congested Districts Board should be put in a position to deal thoroughly with the land question in the Highlands.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said that after the discursive discussion they had had about those who dwelt in other lands, he regretted that they had only a few moments left to deal with our own people. He wished to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the Crofters Act Amendment Bill would be brought in, and whether they could have those sums of money which his hon. friend had mentioned, together with the penalties imposed upon trawlers and other people breaking the Fishery Regulations. Why could they not have these moneys for the benefit of the Highland counties ? It was all very well to talk about the affairs of the Congo, Macedonia, and other parts of the world, but there were a number of things which should be dealt with in Sutherlandshire. In regard to these matters all he could get from his right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland were some very civil private letters similar to those which were received from the representative of the late Tory Government. He had hoped that the Liberal Government on its accession to power would look after the Tory officials who dominated every office. He stood up for the interests of our own people in our own country, and trusted that something would be done to assist the crofters and others in the Highland Counties. The people of Sutherland must have postal and telegraphic improvements and better communications.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said that he hoped with regard to the Crofters Bill the Government was not going to be one of fair promises and no performance. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well the condition of things in the Highlands. The law was being broken and this Scottish Bill ought not to be allowed to drag on week after week and month after month. The sooner the Bill was drafted and presented the better for the peace of the country. He hoped to receive an assurance that the Crofters Bill would be brought in soon after the Easter holidays. He was quite assured that the Prime Minister was sympathetic towards the measure.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire) said the point raised was that the Bill promised in the King's Speech in regard to the Highland question should be brought in at the earliest day possible. His hon. friend knew from Answers to Questions which he had given within the last forty-eight hours that there was every desire on the part of the Government to bring the Bill in as soon as possible. No time would be lost over the matter, and the opinion of the Prime Minister which had been quoted was shared by the whole of the Cabinet. He could only say that the Bill would be introduced as soon as possible. Its provisions would be carefully considered, and he hoped that nothing would be said outside the House that would militate against its favourable consideration. He should be very sorry if any illegalities committed outside the House were to militate against the favourable consideration of the measure, and he hoped that the Government would have the support of his hon. friend and others in deprecating any steps of that kind.

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Motion for the Adjournment of the House lapsed without Question put.

And the House, pursuant to the Order of the House [this day], stood adjourned till Tuesday, April 24th.

Adjourned at half after Seven of the clock till Tuesday, April 24th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 24th April, 1906.

The House met at 2.45 p.m.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

North East Lincolnshire Water Bill. Read the third time and passed.

Kiddderminster Gas Bill [Lords]; Macclesfield and District Tramways Bill; New Mills Urban District Council Bill; Uxbridge Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [Lords]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [Lords]; Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [Lords]; Holyhead Water Bill [Lords]; H. R. Baines and Company Bill [Lords]; Knott End Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Mirfield Gas Bill [Lords]; North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [Lords]; Romford and District Tramways Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. The Chairman of Ways and Means, in pursuance of Standing Order 83 relating to Private Bills, informed the House that, in his opinion, the Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill, though unopposed, ought to be treated as an opposed Bill.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINE (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Allhallows Colliery, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Aberyskir; Acton; Adlington; Alby; Allestree; Altham (two); Apsley End (two); Aylsham; Barnet; Barrington; Bath (two); Battle (two); Bearsted; Beckley (two); Bedlington (two); Bermondsey; Bettws Penpont; Boston; Boxley (two); Brentford; Broughton; Burnley (two); Butterwick; Burton Agnes (two); Bury; Camberwell; Cawston; Chadderton (two); Chaddesen (two); Chelmsford; Cheltenham; Churchill; Comberton; Coney Weston (two); Coventry; Cowley St. John; Culford (two); Denstone; East Bedlington; East Crompton; Edmonton; Ellastone; Elmswell (four); Far Cotton; Felbrigg cum Metton; Fetcham (two); Flint; Foxholes; Freshwater; Fringford; Frisby; Fulham (four); Gazeley; Gimingham (two); Glasbury; Gosforth; Great Barton (two); Great Greenford; Grindale (two); Hackney; Haggerston (two); Hailey and Crawley; Harphant (two); Hepple; Hilborough; Holwell; Homerton; Horton Kirby; Houghton; Icklingham; Ilfracombe; Isleworth (three); Ixworth (two); Kennington (two); Kenton Kidlington (two); King's Lynn; Kingstone Lisle; Kirmington (two); Knowl Hill (two); Laugham; Lavenham (two); Leesfield; Little Gaddesden; Little Gransden; Llanfihangel Nantbran (two); Llanfrynach; Llangammarch (two); Langorse (two); Llanveigan; London (two); Loughton; Maidstone; Manchester (three); Marylebone (two); Meesdon; Melbourne; Melksham; Mellis; Milton; Nafferton (two); Neasden; North Kensington; Norton juxta Malton (two); Nottingham; Old Brentford; Papworth Everard; Park Bridge; Penley; Poplar; Radley (two); Raughton Head with Gatesgill (two); Rockland; Rothbury; Rudby; Rudby in Cleveland; Rugby; Rumburgh; St. Alban's; St. Osyth; St. Pancras (two); Saltney (two); Sheering (two); Sidcup (two); Skirbeck; Sotby; South Croydon; Southfleet; South Lynn, All Saints; South Mymms; South Tottenham; Stanton; Stanton by Bridge; Stockport; Stoke in Coventry; Stoke d'Abernon; Stoneyholme; Swavasey; Swindon; Tackley; Thelnetham (two); Traianglas (two); Trunch; Upper Norwood; Walham Green; Warham; Weaverthorpe; Wendlebury (two);

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

West Green; West Kington; Whorlton (two); Willesden; Wolvercote; Wolverhampton; and, Woodhouse; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL).

Petition from Hackney, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Petition from Crewkerne, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Broadstairs, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MAL, SANNA.

Petition of Sanna Mal, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

MULL, MEHTA FONG.

Petition of Mehta Fong Mull, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA (NATIVE RISING IN NATAL.)

Petition of Alfred Magena, for inquiry by the Imperial Government; to lie upon the Table.

TUBERCULOSIS (ANIMALS) PREVENTION AND COMPENSATION BILL.

Petition from Dundee, against; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Liverpool, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS.)

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3554 to 3562.

2. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series). Copy of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 648.

3. Treaty Series (No. 3, 1906). Copy of Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United Kingdom and Roumania. Signed at Bucharest, 31st October, 1905. Ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, 17th March, 1906.

4. Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland). Copy of Fifth Annual General Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, 1904–5.

5. Royal Observatory (Edinburgh). Copy of Sixteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

6. Electric Power and Supply Bills. Copy of Memorandum by the Commissioners of Works on Electric Power and Supply Bills.

7. Uganda Protectorate. Copy of Report on a Botanical Mission through the Forest Districts of Buddu and the Western and Nile Provinces of the Uganda Protectorate, by Mr. M. T. Dawe, Officer in Charge, Forestry and Scientific Department.

8. Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, Gibraltar. Copy of Further Correspondence relating to measures adopted for checking the spread of Venereal Disease.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EGYPT (No. 1, 1906).

Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Rothschild*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.]

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.]

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th April, 1906, declaring that Robert William Street, Boy, Ordnance Vessel "Prudent," War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into the Aetiology, Pathology, and Morbid Anatomy and other matters connected with the diseases of sheep known as louping-ill and braxy. Parts I., II., and III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Copy presented, of Forty-ninth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1905. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licences granted to James Kitching and Frederick Sadler, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 127].

NAVY (OFFICERS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 28th February; *Mr. Bellairs*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128].

FLEETS (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th March; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 129].

PAPERS LAID UPOM THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Thames Conservancy, General Reports and Accounts of the Conservators for 1905; [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 130].

2. County Court Rules,—Copy of County Court Rules, dated 4th April, 1906, with Explanatory Memorandum [by Act].

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (IRELAND) (FEMALE INSPECTORS).

Return ordered, "showing what Local Authorities in Ireland in the year 1905 had appointed (*a*) Female Sanitary Sub-Officers; and (*b*) Male and Female Inspectors of workshops who are not also sanitary sub-officers; and the number and salaries of the officers appointed in each case (being supplemented to the Returns Nos. 87 and 342, of Session 1905, as regards England and Wales, and Scotland, respectively)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sailors and Humane Society Medals.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Naval Reserve when in uniform are permitted to wear the medals of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society; and, if not, for what reason.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Answer to the first part of the hon. and gallant Member's Question is in the negative. As regards the second part of the Question, the reason is that, in the absence of any such restriction, the number of medals which might be worn would be excessive.

Ordnance Survey.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state what has been done with the money received from corporations during the past fifteen years as a contribution to the cost of surveying towns on the 5-foot scale; whether he can state what is the amount derived from the sale of Ordnance Survey maps; and whether the officials are allowed to make contracts with private firms respecting the production of those maps.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Since April 1st, 1895, moneys received from local authorities for revision of maps on town scales have been brought to account as Appropriations in Aid of the Survey Vote (See Subhead H. of that Vote). Prior to that date, such moneys were paid over to the Exchequer as extra receipts. The amount derived from the sale of Ordnance Survey maps in the year ending December 31st, 1905, was £21,703. Contracts were formerly made with private firms for executing some of the engraving of the Ordnance Survey maps, but these have been discontinued, and no work of the kind has been done in the last three years.

Ordnance Survey Officials.

MR. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state what is the amount of the salary attached to the position of the Director-General of the Ordnance Survey; what salaries do the officials holding the positions of divison officers receive, and how many of them are employed on the Ordnance Survey; and whether the Director-General and division officers also receive perquisites which include free residence, travelling expenses, working pay, and a possible bonus at the end of each financial year out of the surplus of the grant for conducting their department on the most rigid economy principles regarding the working employees.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) There are twenty-four officers of Royal Engineers employed on the Ordnance Survey. Their pay and allowances are as follows:—

	Survey Pay.	Regimental Pay.	Total Pay.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Director-General - -	—	—	1,200 0 0
Colonels and Lieutenant-Colonels - - -	547 10 0	328 10 0	876 0 0
Majors - - - -	438 0 0	292 0 0	730 0 0
Captains - - -	246 7 6	211 7 11	457 15 5
Lieutenants - - -	214 8 9	124 14 2	339 2 11
Quartermaster - -	155 2 6	200 15 0	355 17 6

Nine of the officers receive their regimental pay from Army Votes and the remainder from the Vote for the Ordnance Survey. None of the officers are provided with free official residences. They receive travelling expenses when travelling on duty, but no bonus at the end of each financial year or at any other time.

Government Shipbuilding Programme.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in what month was the decision arrived at to abandon the building of the fourth armoured cruiser which Parliament authorised last July; and whether he can explain why no mention was made of the decision in Lord Cawdor's statement of Admiralty policy, November 30, 1905.

(Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.) The decision was reached at the end of July, but it was not considered to be in the interests of the public service to promulgate it at that date.

Barrels made at Deptford Victualling Yard.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of barrels made in the cooperage department at the Deptford Victualling Yard in each of the years 1890, 1895, 1900, and 1905, and the average cost per barrel in each year; and also will he state the number purchased from the trade in each of the years 1890, 1895, 1900, and 1905, and the average price paid in each year.

(Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.) The following is the information required:—

	1890–1.	1895–6.	1900–1.	1904–5.
Number made - -	2,839	1,249	181	159
Average cost - -	14*s.*	17*s.* 8*d.*	15*s.*	15*s.* 1*d.*
Number bought - -	Nil	874	2,935	3,826
Average price paid -	—	13*s.* 3*d.*	18*s.* 3*d.*	19*s.* 5*d.*

The figures, however, are scarcely comparable. The barrels made in 1895–6 were manufactured from new staves, whilst those made in 1900–1 and 1904–5 were remanufactured out of old materials available; also the barrels purchased in 1900–1 and 1904–5 were of a different quality from those bought in 1895–6.

Registration of Voters.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the instructions for filling up the form of requisitions by overseers requiring names of inhabitant occupiers, included as Form A, pages 39 (paragraph 16) and 76 (paragraph 16) in the Registrations Order, 1895, contained in the Return issued by the Home Office, dated March 21st 1895, numbered 229, and ordered by this House to be printed on April 24th, 1895, to the effect that if the landlord of a house let out in separate tenements lives in the house he must not return the names of the occupiers of tenements in that house, which instruction is contrary to the recent decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of Kent *v.* Fittall on November 7th, 1905; and whether he will arrange that a new Order in Council shall be issued, making the corrections rendered necessary by that decision of the Court of Appeal.

(Answered by Mr. John Burns.) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. My attention has been called to the subject to which it relates, but, as regards this year's registration of electors, I do not think it would be practicable to deal with the matter by means of a new Order in Council, seeing that the time for the issue of the precepts to the overseers which are prescribed by the present Order respecting the making out of the lists of electors has already expired. I propose, however, to issue a circular to the overseers with a view to their substituting a new paragraph for that numbered 16 in the instructions for filling up Form A. By this means I hope that effect will be given to the decision of the Court. The circular is in preparation, and will be issued as soon as possible.

Alcohol for Industrial Purposes.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could, in the interests of the firms using alcohol for industrial purposes, instruct the Inland Revenue authorities to allow spirits to be received in large tanks, as is done in Germany and other continental countries, thus saving cost of carriage and risk of loss; and whether he could also instruct the same authorities to allow spirits to be denatured at all the distilleries, instead of at the factories at which the alcohol is used; and will he also say if there is any legal limit to the size of casks which may be filled with spirits at a distillery.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The first two Questions were considered by the Industrial Alcohol Committee, and subsequently also by the Board of Inland Revenue. In either case an alteration of the law would be required to allow of the arrangements suggested. But for various reasons connected with the safety of the Revenue, it is not considered that the use of tanks for conveyance of spirit that is neither duty-paid nor methylated would be desirable. Spirits removed from a distillery must be filled into casks, which must not be of less capacity than nine gallons. There is no maximum limit to the size of the casks.

Collection of King's Taxes.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is aware that the promise of his predecessor in office not to allow extreme pressure to be used to secure payment of taxes before the month of May is being disregarded by local officials in south London, causing hardship to many small tradesmen; and whether he will stop such proceedings.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) There is no record either at the Treasury or at the Inland Revenue Department of any such promise having been made. The local officials have instructions to grant a reasonable extension of time for payment in cases where good ground for delay can be shown, and any taxpayer who thinks himself entitled to greater indulgence than he can obtain from them can appeal to the Board of Inland Revenue.

Indian Civil Service—Probationers at Oxford University.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether a grant of £500 is annually paid by the Government of India to the University of Oxford, in consideration of the university providing the teaching for probationers for the Indian Civil Service at Oxford during their period of probation; and whether seeing that, notwithstanding this annual grant, it is a common practice among the colleges at Oxford to deprive Indian Civil Service probationers of their college scholarships during their year of probation, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The subvention of £500 is made to the University of Oxford to enable it to maintain an Oriental school, at which probationers for the Indian Civil Service can study the subjects in which they are required to pass at the final examination. Subventions of the same character, and with the same object, are made to certain other universities in the United Kingdom where probationers are similarly provided for. I have no information as to the practice alleged in the latter part of the Question. Any such action, if taken by the colleges, would not come under the review of the university authorities, inasmuch as the colleges are independent bodies in this respect. I do not propose to take any action in the matter.

European and Native Candidates for Indian Civil Service Appointments.

SIR H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the India Office have laid it down as a condition of appointment in regard to all the ten appointments of assistant engineer in India, which are to be filled up on or after May 1st next, that the candidates shall be of European extraction; and whether in the event of this being so, he proposes to take steps to neutralise this disqualifying racial condition by the direct appointment in England of Indian students, properly qualified in other respects, to the permanent establishment of the Public Works Department in India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) So long as the Royal Engineering College at Cooper's Hill is open, natives of India have been able to obtain appointment to the Public Works Department of the Government of India from this country to the extent of two appointments a year. The ten additional appointments which will be made from the open market this year have been restricted to Europeans, because Cooper's Hill College is still open, and that mode of access was open to Indians desiring to enter the department during the current year and in 1907. In

1908 and after, when the whole of the recruitment will be direct from the open market, it has already been announced by my predecessor that natives of India may be recruited in this country up to 10 per cent. of the total number appointed.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Beagling by "Britannia" Cadets.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the sport of beagling, provided for the cadets of H.M.S. "Britannia," and partly paid for out of public funds, is regarded as cruel and degrading; and whether, in view of this, he will withhold any funds now applied to the up-keep of this form of sport, and otherwise use his influence to have a drag hunt substituted and thus make cadet exercise at home conform to that arranged for cadets when being trained in Mediterranean ports.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): After due consideration of the Question, during the recent visit to Dartmouth, it was decided that there is no occasion to interfere with the practice.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I shall raise this Question on the Estimates.

Naval Cadets at Osborne.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many out of the 588 cadets who have been entered into Osborne are the sons of naval engineers; and whether he is aware that a previous list exists at the Admiralty for the engineer students at Keyham, whose entries are to cease, showing that out of a total of 303 no less than thirty-nine were sons of naval engineers, making a proportionate entry of over seventy-five for 588 engineer students.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Out of the total number of candidates who have entered the Royal Naval College at Osborne during the three years of its existence, two have been sons of engineer officers of the Royal Navy. Out of the eighty-six engineer students admitted to Keyham during the corresponding period, eleven were sons of engineer officers, but I have no knowledge of the list to which the hon. Member refers in the second part of his Question.

Chatham Dockyard—Breaking up of War Vessels.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, in view of the slackness of work at Chatham Dockyard, whether he will explain why the ordinary staff of men were not used to break up the war vessels which were sold by auction there on April 3rd, and whether it would have yielded a far better return; and will he give the necessary orders to follow this procedure with any ships which remain to be disposed of.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I have nothing to add to the statement which I have already made in reply to a similar Question asked by the hon. Member for Chatham on March 27th.†

Admiralty Yacht "Enchantress."

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty why the number of privates of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, acting as ward-room servants on board the Admiralty yacht "Enchantress" when the Lords of the Admiralty are on board, has been increased from two in the Navy Estimates for 1905–6 to seven in the Navy Estimates for 1906–7; and whether any economy is anticipated from this change.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The increase in the number of Marines referred to, which appears in the Estimates of 1906–7 for the first time, was rendered necessary when the new "Enchantress" (a much larger vessel than the old Admiralty yacht) was commissioned in 1904. This involves a slight increase in expenditure.

Cost of Sword Bayonets.

MR. HIGHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many sword bayonets (rifle) were made at Enfield during the year 1905–6, and the average cost of them; and how many were purchased from the trade in the same year, with the average price paid for them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1056–7.

* THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): 25,542 bayonets were made at Enfield in 1905–6 at a cost of 9s. 3d. each. 12,500 bayonets were ordered from the trade for payment in 1905–6 at an average price of 9s. 3·8d.

Cost of Rifle Manufacture.

MR. HIGHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the cost of all the rifles purchased from the trade exceeds by fully £1 each the cost of those made at Sparkbrook and Enfield, and in view of the fact that the agreement for the sale of the Sparkbrook factory has not yet been signed, will he reconsider the clause by which a contract for a large number of rifles is to be given to the purchasers of the factory at a price so much above the cost of those made in the Government factories.

* MR. HALDANE: It is not anticipated that the price of rifles made at Enfield this year will be less than that for the rifles made by the trade, and it is not proposed to make any change in the allocation as suggested in the Question.

MR. HIGHAM: Will not the cost be increased this year by reason of the small number made at Enfield?

* MR. HALDANE: I must ask for notice of that Question.

The Ross-shire Militia.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the members of the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia) who reside in the Island of Lewis recently received notice summoning them to Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, and directing them to travel by the mail steamer leaving Stornoway on the night of Monday as there was no special boat this year, and stating that all would certainly not be allowed to travel by the mail steamer leaving Stornoway on Tuesday night, and that those who did not travel on Monday and found themselves crowded out of Tuesday's mail boats could not arrive in time for the assembly, and would render themselves liable to punishment; and, seeing that there are about 700 of the Militia in the island, and the steamer will only accommodate 250 men, will he explain by whose authority the notice was issued; and why the men were threatened with punishment if they did not arrive in time.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the members of the Ross-shire Militia, 3rd Seaforth Highlanders, were recently summoned to attend at Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, with the result that 400 men gathered into Stornoway from all parts of the island on Monday the 2nd instant for the purpose of proceeding that night to Fort George; whether he is aware that, as the steamer would only accommodate 250 men, the remainder, many of whom had travelled long distances to the town, had the greatest difficulty in finding accommodation for the night; and will he state who is responsible for having failed to make suitable arrangements, and in what way the men have been compensated for their outlays.

I have further to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that the 3rd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Militia), which is almost entirely composed of Lewis men, were summoned to Fort George between the 2nd and 4th instant, and that there are about 700 of the Militia in the island, he will explain why no special boat was chartered for their conveyance, seeing that the mail steamer would only accommodate 250 men, and that it was, therefore, impossible for all the men to reach Fort George by the date specified.

*MR. HALDANE: The training of this battalion was arranged to commence on April 4th. The commanding officer endeavoured to make arrangements for a special steamer on April 3rd, but as he was unsuccessful, he forthwith issued the notice mentioned. In doing so he followed the precedent of previous years, the plan having worked successfully hitherto. Liability to punishment would follow upon absence as a matter of course, but under the circumstances no punishment was inflicted on those delayed by the want of room on the boats. Upon receiving intimation that a number of men had been unable to get passages on April 3rd the commanding officer telegraphed to the police superintendent at Stornoway authorising him to provide money and shelter. The special travelling allowance of thirty-four shillings granted to Militiamen of this battalion will meet any possible claims, the return fare from Stornoway to Fort George being seventeen shillings. It is evident that the officer commanding miscalculated the numbers for which accommodation was required, owing to the difficulty of estimating the number of men present in the island. Arrangements will be made by which, it is hoped, the recurrence of such an incident can in future be prevented.

Mr. WEIR was understood to ask if it were not the fact that on the return of the regiment from Cairo a few years since the men were treated with similar neglect, with the result that a good many died from the exposure.

*Mr. HALDANE : I have no information on that point.

British Indian Emigration Laws.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is intended to move the Government of India to extend the scope of Schedule 1 to the Indian Emigration Act XXI. of 1883, by a notification under Section 8, so as to include British Central Africa among the countries to which emigration from India is lawful.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester N.W.): There is no intention of moving the Government of India to take the action mentioned in my hon. friend's Question, as no demand for such a course has been received from the British Central Africa Protectorate.

Indian Army—Denial of Disaffection Rumours.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, if, in view of the feeling in the Native Army in India created by the schemes of the Commander-in-Chief, he will make any statement to the House on the subject.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs): I cannot discover that any special feeling whatever in the Native Army in India has been created by the schemes of the Commander-in-Chief, whatever that expression may exactly signify. The Governor-General assures me that his inquiries corroborate information communicated to me by him in February last, that the spirit in the Native Army is excellent. The military reports on which that information was founded were made quite independently of the Commander-in-Chief, and were all to the effect that there is no ground for alarmist statements about unrest in the Native Army. Assertions that there is ground for suspecting the military fidelity of the Native Army appear from all the evidence attainable to be wholly untrue. I understand from a copious summary with which I have been furnished that the Indian Press is almost unanimous in describing allegations in that sense as entirely without foundation. The desire to raise the standard of efficiency no doubt involves a greater strain upon officers and men, whether in India or here; but I have every reason to know, as we should naturally expect, that the Commander-in-Chief and the commanders under him are fully alive to the necessity of making these inevitable sacrifices the lightest possible.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): My right hon. friend in his reply has taken one view of this question; but there is another—he is probably aware of the alleged unpopularity with the whole Army, both white and native, of the new stations on the extreme frontier for which land was purchased last year.

Mr. MORLEY: Yes, I am aware of that; but that unpopularity is another matter.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.) asked the Secretary of State for India whether he referred to Anglo-Indian papers or to papers written by natives of India.

Mr. MORLEY: I refer to the papers expressing European opinion upon this subject.

Crofters Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of evictions from crofters' stone houses in the Island of Lewis, he would take steps to induce the landlord, Major Matheson, to withdraw action pending the introduction of the Crofters Act Amemdment Bill.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I have only now received notice of this Question, and I have been unable to make inquiries as to recent events in Lewis. But, if I am not mistaken, Major Matheson has hitherto postponed taking the steps alleged in the Question. It is certainly the hope of the Government that nothing will be done either in Lewis or elsewhere by any of those concerned to prejudice the consideration of the proposals that they intend to lay before Parliament.

MR. WEIR: What I ask is that the Government will take steps to induce this landlord not to evict these people? I will to-morrow give the right hon. Gentleman evidence that evictions were carried out only two days ago.

Irish Crown Prosecutors.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland who is responsible for the appointments to the office of Crown Prosecutor in Ireland; whether, with a view to preserving confidence in the administration of the law, especially in the province of Ulster, where prosecutions of a Party character are very frequent, he will secure that the candidate of one of the political Parties should not fill the office, as is the case in County Tyrone; if his attention has been called to that gentleman's conduct of a malicious injury case at the recent quarter sessions in County Derry, and to the learned judge's comments thereon; and if he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): Crown Prosecutors in Ireland are appointed by the Attorney-General for the time being. I do not think that I should be justified in removing from office a prosecutor who discharged his duties efficiently, merely upon the ground that he had been a candidate for one of the Parliamentary Divisions of the county for which he prosecuted. The latter part of the Question refers to the conduct of a Crown Prosecutor in a civil action in another county. The Attorney-General has nothing to do with anything outside criminal proceedings. If the hon. Member desires to complain of the learned gentleman's conduct in a civil action, his proper course is to communicate with the Benchers of the King's Inn.

MR. MACVEAGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman think it desirable that a Crown Prosecutor should undertake a prosecution in a constituency for which he was standing as a political candidate?

MR. CHERRY: I do not think such a thing would be desirable, but it is only fair to the gentleman concerned to state that the prosecution did not take place in his constituency.

MR. MACVEAGH: But it was in the same county.

MR. CHERRY: Yes, but not in his own constituency.

Irish Land Purchase—King-Harman Estate.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 17th February the Boyle Board of Guardians forwarded to the Estates Commissioners a protest against certain attempts to dispose of a large grazing farm on the King-Harman Estate to a grazier, and that a second communication was sent on the 27th February requesting the appropriation of Termon House and grounds within the township of Boyle for a technical school, and also for the permanent use of a field for a show ground and for other purposes; and whether he will explain why, beyond a formal acknowledgment of receipt of the communications, no answer has yet been given to the guardians.

MR. CHERRY: I will answer this Question in the absence of my right hon. friend. I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they duly acknowledged the receipt of the two Resolutions which are the subject of this Question. The first of these Resolutions referred to the Keelogues and Carrickmore farm, which the Commissioners attempted to acquire as untenanted land but failed; and the farm has now been purchased by the National Bank in whose occupation it was as tenants. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with any proposed sale by the Bank. As regards the second Resolution, the Commissioners have so far acquired only a small portion, viz. five acres, of the lands of Termon. Should they succeed in acquiring the house and the remaining sixty acres they will consider the views of the guardians as to the mode of utilising these lands. I understand that the Commissioners have now addressed to the guardians a communication to that effect.

Irish School Building Grants.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Waterford I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether the correspondence which was proceeding in November last between the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, the Irish Government, and the Treasury, with reference to grants towards the erection of schools has yet concluded; and whether he is aware that inconvenience has been caused as regards new schools being erected in lieu of schools which had been condemned as insanitary by the delay which has arisen in making arrangements between the Treasury and the Commissioners of National Education.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): The question is still under the consideration of the Irish Government and the Treasury. But I do not think that much practical inconvenience has been caused by the delay. Provision has been made in the Estimates for the current year for an expenditure of £35,000 on Building Grants.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated Mr. Bright to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Mr. Bryn Roberts.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill: Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Brynmor Jones.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate [this day] on Amendment to Second Reading [2nd March] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

LAND VALUES TAXATION, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Question proposed, "That the Order [23rd March] for resuming the adjourned debate on the Motion for committing the Land Values Taxation, etc. (Scotland) Bill to the Standing Committee on Law etc., be read, and discharged, and the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of fifteen Members."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he desired to express his dissent from the Motion, but at the same time he recognised that, as it was down in the name of a member of the Government, it was sure to pass, and therefore it was useless to divide against it. This question had been debated in the House of Commons on four separate occasions, and its principle had been accepted by Parliament. Scottish opinion was in favour of sending the Bill to a Grand Committee of Scottish Members, but that proposal had not met with the support of the Government. Instead of that they had the proposal to send it to a Select Committee of fifteen Members, and he would ask any one with the slightest experience of the procedure of the House if under such circumstances the Bill had the slightest chance of passing this session. It would be practically impossible for the Committee to report in time for the Bill to pass into law, and the whole of the proceedings would be useless, because the Bill would be dead at the end of the session. He therefore viewed with extreme regret the throwing away of what he regarded as an opportunity of passing a Bill which embodied a sound progressive principle. It was very rarely any Scottish Member secured a place in the ballot, but this little opportunity having been obtained, he urged that it should not be sacrificed for want of the few hours necessary to refer the Bill to the Grand Committee on Law or a Committee of Scottish Members. They were not advancing the Bill one single stage by the action they were that day adopting. If the Bill were to go to a Select Committee, even if the Committee reported this session, it would not be much advanced, because it would still have to go through the Committee stage. Practically every Scottish Member had pledged himself in favour of the Bill, and the day had gone for beginning again *de novo*. If there was any desire to pass the Bill this session, why should they not refer it to the Grand Committee on Law or a Committee of Scottish Members? That was the only possible way by which it could be passed. There should be no mistake; to adopt the Motion was to kill the Bill for this session, and he thought it was a matter of extreme regret that that should be the position. Even if he were to ask for it, the hon. Gentleman in whose name the Motion stood could not give an undertaking that the Bill would be considered if it came back, because there was not time, and the Government was not in a position to give facilities for the passing of the Bill. If the Government, however, would give the same undertaking as they had given with regard to the Feeding of Children Bill and assist in every possible way in order, to get it passed, his objection to some extent would be met. He certainly protested against going back and renewing the inquiries which had taken place under the auspices of the House into the question of the taxation of land values. They had got far beyond that stage, and he thought the feeling of Scottish Members was almost entirely in favour of the measure. He considered they were throwing away an opportunity of passing a measure which embodied an important principle which it was desirable should be carried into law.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said he greatly rejoiced that the Government proposed to refer the Bill to a Committee other than a Standing Committee. He believed the Bill was not suited for discussion by a Standing Committee. It contained many propositions which, if brought before a Standing Committee, would be found to be controversial in character. A condition of congestion was already threatened in connection with the Bills which had been referred to the Standing Committee on Law, and they had seen instances where Bills had been destroyed by delays in proceedings before Standing Committees. He was sure that as the result of referring Bills to Standing Committees the intention of the House had sometimes been defeated. Another reason why he wished to express his satisfaction with the present proposition was that he did not think this Bill could be discussed adequately by a Standing Committee. The proposals contained in the Bill were, in his opinion, wholly inconsistent with those in another Bill now before Parliament. The intention of this Bill was to limit open spaces, whereas the other Bill, which was in the hands of the Government, was meant to facilitate the provision of open spaces, and thus render our towns more suitable places of habitation for decent citizens. In view of this inconsistency, he thought that a Select Committee should consider the proposals in the two Bills with a full appreciation of the difficulty of reconciling them, and should present a report to the House such as would tend to make legislation on the subject more useful.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he was glad the Government had adopted the Motion which he put on the Paper directly the Bill had been read a second time. He did not share the opinion that it was adopted with the object of killing the Bill.

MR. DALZIEL: I did not say that.

MR. HAROLD COX hoped, however, that the Bill would be killed as the result of inquiry. He believed they wanted more inquiry. They had a very important inquiry on the subject some years ago by a Royal Commission, which reported at great length, but that Royal Commission had been persistently misquoted ever since. He remembered going to a very important banquet at which a prominent politician made a great speech, in the course of which he said that for many years the Radicals had been sneered at as ignorant demagogues because they had advocated the taxation of land values. Then he went on to say that they learned on the authority of two gentlemen of the Treasury, Sir George Murray and Sir Edward Hamilton, that in the taxation of land values there was an inexhaustible source of revenue. He (Mr. Cox) afterwards looked up the report of the Commission, and he found that what those authorities really said was that there was no inexhaustible source of revenue in the taxation of land values. For every one person who read the report of the Commission there would be at least 10,000 who would read the speech, and this showed how delusions were propagated. It seemed to him that there was a case for further inquiry, and it was for that reason he suggested that in appointing a Committee the Government should not follow the usual practice of picking out men who had committed themselves to one side or the other. On the contrary, they should, if possible, pick out fifteen persons who were not committed on the subject, so that they might have as far as possible an impartial tribunal. That would give a chance of getting a real verdict on the subject. He was himself so confident that when this subject was inquired into the whole delusion would disappear, that he should be very glad indeed to see the English Bill now before the House read a second time and referred to the same Committee. He did not see why this Government, which contained a good many members of Scottish extraction, should be ready to make an experiment on poor little Scotland. He hoped before they were subjected to this danger they would have a full and impartial inquiry by a Committee composed of persons not previously pledged one way or the other.

*Mr. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs) said he entirely agreed with the remarks of the hon. Member for Preston. He did not think the House understood the important changes which the Bill was likely to make in the system of local taxation in Scotland. The most important principle in the Bill embodied in the 7th Clause was given away by the Lord Advocate in his speech on the Second Reading, and he thought that that alone was sufficient to show the absolute necessity of having the matter thrashed out.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs) said he was strongly in favour of the Bill, and should be keenly in favour of its going to a Scottish Committee. At the same time he wished to tell the House of the situation in which he found himself and of the circumstances under which it was proposed to send the Bill to a Select Committee. The Grand Committee on Law had become extremely blocked, and among other measures there was before that Committee the Workmen's Compensation Bill. Any one who knew the contentious matter in that Bill would recognise that it would occupy the time of the Committee for a considerable period. The Scottish Members had met and considered the situation, and their elected leader, the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs, put the Question to the Prime Minister whether, in the circumstances, he would remit the Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. DALZIEL: Was it not the case that the Scottish Members were told that the Government would grant any other committee but a Grand Committee?

Mr. THOMAS SHAW said that that was not the case. They were told if that were moved the Government would dissent from the proposition. It was moved, and the Scotch Members then, through their representatives, asked that the Bill should be remitted to this Select Committee. They having asked the Government to do that, and having obtained that pledge, the Government were there in fulfilment of their pledge. He entirely dissented from the view that anything should be done to kill the Bill, and also from the view that the election of the Select Committee to sit upon the Bill would necessarily have that result. The Select Committee was largely master of its own procedure, and it was his earnest personal hope that the labours of the Committee might effect such a scrutiny of the whole matter as would enable the Bill to be passed in this session, or at all events enable it to be so shaped as to afford a speedy opportunity for legislation on the subject. He should endeavour to inspire all the members of the Committee with whom he had any influence to urge on their proceedings, and it was his earnest hope that before the end of the session they would have the Bill. His own view was entirely antagonistic to that of the hon. Member for Preston. The hon. Member had said there were delusions with regard the Bill. He agreed, and he hoped that a very few sittings of the Select Committee would blow into the air such delusions as those held by the hon. Member. The Government accepted the principle of the Bill, and they wanted it to be moderately, skilfully, and carefully engineered. The suggestion of the Scottish Members that it should be sent to a Select Committee had been agreed to, and upon the whole he thought, under the circumstances, it was the best way in which to get the Bill forward.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee of fifteen members.

NOTICES OF ACCIDENTS BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee) considered.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said the net result of reference to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts, 1872 and 1875, appeared to be that the two sets of Acts referred to all mines of all descriptions, but it did not appear to him to be a very convenient method of legislating. They had no reference whatever to quarries, but they were brought in by the Act of 1894. Thus they had to consult no less than five Acts to see what class of property the section actually referred to. Not only so, but the machinery provided under the Coal Mines Regulation Act and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act was quite different. In one case they had an elaborate schedule, and the Secretary of State might make any alteration he liked, and in the other case there was no schedule at all. It appeared to him a very inconvenient way of legislating. It led to endless disputes in the law courts, and to a great deal of uncertainty as to what the Act really meant. Clause 1 referred to accidents in or about mines and quarries, and it was quite evident they must know exactly what they meant by a mine. The definition of a mine in the Coal Mines Regulation Act was one thing and the definition in the Metalliferous Mines Regulations Act was a somewhat different thing. The definition in the Coal Mines Regulation Act included machinery, but in the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act it did not. A mineowner would thus be in the greatest possible doubt as to what accident he was bound to report under the two Acts. No doubt he would be told that the Home Office would tell him, but it was not for the Home Office to decide. The Act of Parliament was the only authority the owner or agent was bound to recognise, and he was entitled to have, and the House was bound to make, his obligations under the Act absolutely clear and plain. He (Lord R. Cecil) had drafted a clause which he believed exactly carried out the sense of the Government clause, and, if there was any blot in it, it could undoubtedly be remedied. He earnestly appealed to the House to take this opportunity of protesting against this referential system of legislation, which had no advantage whatever. The reason for adopting it was well known. It was to enable departments to conceal exactly what it was intended to do, and to pass Bills through the House without dissent. It was not right, however, merely to save time and trouble, to legislate in that way, and to create difficulties for those who had to abide by the Act. He ventured, therefore, to move the clause which stood in his name, and he trusted the House would support his protest.

New clause.

"(1)—(a) On or before the twenty-first day of January in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every coal mine shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a correct return specifying, with respect to the year ending on the preceding thirty-first day of December, such particulars as the Secretary of State may prescribe of all accidents which occurred in or about such coal mine during the year to which the return relates, and disabled for more than seven days any person employed in or about such mine from working at his ordinary work; (b) On or before the first day of February in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every metalliferous mine shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a like correct return; (c) On or before the first day of February in every year the owner, agent, or manager of every quarry shall send to the inspector of the district on behalf of a Secretary of State a like correct return. (2) The expression "coal mine" means and includes mines of coal, mines of stratified iron-stone, mines of shale, and mines of fire-clay. (3) The expression "metalliferous mine" means and includes every mine of whatever description other than a coal mine. (4) The expression "quarry" means and includes every place (not being a mine) in which persons work in getting slate, stone, coprolites, or other minerals, and any part of which is more than twenty feet deep. (5) The expression "mine" includes every shaft or pit in the course of being sunk, and every level and inclined plane in the course of being driven, and all the shafts, levels, planes, works, machinery, tramways, and sidings, both below ground and above ground, in and adjacent to and belonging to the mine. (6) The expressions "owner" and "agent" shall have the same meaning as in The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887."—(*Lord R. Cecil.*)

Brought up and read a first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be now read a second time."

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland) said the House would observe that the noble Lord had not raised any point of principle. He did not object to the legislation proposed, but merely desired that legislation should be enacted in a different form. They agreed heartily and cordially that legislation by reference was an objectionable thing, and should be limited wherever possible, but there were occasions when it was infinitely the most convenient form for all concerned. In this particular matter, the Coal Mines Regulation Act and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act required the owners, agents, or managers of mines to send to the Home Office annual returns, and it was now proposed to add to those returns particulars of accidents. Surely the simplest way of attaining the object they had in view was to say that in those annual returns, which were well understood by everyone concerned, should be included the particulars they required with regard to accidents. The noble Lord had pointed out that there were certain differences of definition between the Coal Mines Regulation Act and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, but those differences were purely of a verbal character and of no importance. They had never given rise to difficulty and had caused no litigation. On the other hand, the clause proposed by the noble Lord would cause several difficulties. There was no provision made for any penalty for any breach of the obligations laid upon the mine-owner, his agent, or manager, and the Home Office would have no power to enforce the requirements which the Bill set forth. It would, moreover, necessitate two returns, and would occasion a large number of consequential Amendments, which had not been placed upon the Paper, and which would throw the House into difficulty and confusion. The same point was raised in Committee, and it was agreed that the proposals in the Bill were by far the best.

LORD R. CECIL said he merely suggested in Committee that the Government should take the clause back and bring up a properly drafted one. They had not done so, and therefore this was the only course open to him.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said the matter was fully argued in Committee and the noble Lord had very little support. Under those circumstances he hoped the House would support the view taken by the Home Office and the Standing Committee on Law, and would not accept the Amendment.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said he had, in and out of season, when in opposition, made it as difficult as possible, and he should continue to make it as difficult as possible, for any Government, where they could properly legislate without referential clauses, to adopt that method of legislation.

He did not think they were wasting time in using the Rules of the House to call attention to the matter. A very interesting work had been written by the Clerk of the House, Sir Courtenay Ilbert, in which it was pointed out that although in certain cases they must legislate in this way, there were various objections to it. If he were in the Government, and if he wanted to make it difficult for the House to move Amendments to a Bill, he dared say he might be wicked enough to make it as little clear and as short as possible, but there was no reason at all for it in this case. This was not a contentious measure in any sense, and nothing would be easier than to draft a clause similar to that drafted by his noble friend. It might be quite true that he had omitted to put in any provision for a penalty, but that could easily be remedied. There were no Parliamentary exigencies which made it necessary to avoid simplicity. On the contrary, it was essential that the Bill should be as clear as possible. By referring to the Memorandum preceding the Bill, they would see the character of the Bill at once—

> "As regards mines, the chief effect of the Bill is, first, to make more definite the existing requirements as to reporting accidents causing serious personal injury; secondly, by requiring annual returns of all accidents which disable for more than fourteen days, to bring a much larger number of accidents than at present under the notice of the Department."

They thus said that the object was to make more definite the existing requirements as to reporting accidents. The clauses relating to factories and workshops were much more simply drafted. He supposed that in the preamble the Government found it necessary to be quite clear in order to avoid all the pitfalls. There was no reason why they should not have done the same with regard to the coalmines and quarries. He was in entire agreement with the noble Lord, and on any and every opportunity when this form of legislation was proposed he would feel it his bounden duty to call attention to the matter, and, if necessary, to aid anybody in the House to dissent from it.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said he did not believe any Government had any such idea as to concealment of their intentions in the drafting of a Bill. He believed they had two objects in view: one to save time, and the other to throw additional work on the Law Officers. No class of cases gave him more trouble when he was a Law Officer than those where they had to sit down and make out a long schedule of Acts of Parliament with sections referring to others which were repealed. He would give them an example from the present Bill. If they looked at the schedule they would see that Section 11 of the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, 1872, was to be repealed from the beginning to the word "injured respectively," but for all he knew that might end in the middle of a sentence. If, a question having been raised about it, they happened to take up the Act of 1872 and they had not this Act before them, they knew nothing whatever about the extent to which it was repealed. The noble Lord had taken considerable trouble in drafting a section. The Under-Secretary had made a very important speech showing great acquaintance with the subject, but he had not pointed out what objection there was to the section drafted by the noble Lord. The wording might in some respects be open to objection, but the Under-Secretary had the most skilled draftsmen in England at his command, and he had only to send for them to have the matter put right in a very few minutes. The noble Lord had pointed out the great difficulty there was in referring to various Acts and ascertaining the proper definition of a mine. The Under-Secretary had said there was no difficulty, but, he himself had seen litigation as to whether the Acts applied to slate, sand, and various other matters. Over and over again these matters had come up, and the noble Lord would confer a great benefit if he could induce the House to have a mine clearly defined. He would like to know from the Under-Secretary whether the noble Lord had properly defined coal mines and metalliferous mines, and, if not, in what respect they were improperly defined? Would it not be much more convenient for every man who had to deal with this Bill as an Act to take it up in black and white and read it, rather than to have to go through numerous Acts of Parliament? If the definitions were correct, why did not the Under-Secretary accept the noble Lord's Amendment? They were all agreed upon this matter, which was merely one of drafting. Would the Under-Secretary undertake, if the Bill were allowed to go through now, when it reached another place, to have this clause redrafted, and have it by that means made clear in the Act of Parliament? If that undertaking were given, he was sure his noble friend would not proceed further with his Amendment.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) said he had not had the advantage of hearing all the speeches that had been delivered, and therefore he hoped that the House would pardon him if he touched upon points which had already been dealt with. An objection had been taken by his hon. and learned friend the Member for Glamorganshire to legislation by reference. It was, no doubt, frequently objectionable, but there were cases in which it was absolutely necessary. For instance, what did they mean to do, and what were they doing by this Bill? They proposed to attach certain obligations to the owners of certain classes of mines. But there were general obligations relating to mines already. There was an Act relating to metalliferous mines, and another relating to coal mines, dealing with the notices and the particulars which were to be supplied with regard to accidents. The particulars required under those Acts were clearly set forth in them, and clearly it would be undesirable, cumbrous, and useless to repeat all those sections in the provisions relating to notices and particulars which were to be found in this Bill. He dared say it would be useful to make every Bill which came before this House a codifying Bill, but such a course would certainly not facilitate legislation, and in this case he did not think it would lead to intelligibility and clearness, because they would have not only to codify the whole of the law but to import into this measure a bundle of sections which had no application to the branch of the subject with which they were dealing, and that, of course, would not improve the Act. Surely the best plan under the circumstances was to say that wherever particulars were required to be notified in other statutes relating to mines and quarries, those particulars should be amplified in the way described in this Bill. That was not legislation by reference which in any way tended to obscure the action of the Government, but was the shortest and simplest way of dealing with the matter. It might be said why not put the whole of the legal obligations of mine owners in one Bill, ["Hear, hear"]. An hon. Member said "hear hear," but the matter was not quite so simple as it appeared to him. It was a far better plan to recognise that the practical common sense of the matter was that coal mine owners and quarry owners must have a working knowledge of and make frequent reference to the principal Acts relating to their own interests. The coal mine owner must often have to refer to the Act of 1875, and in the same way the owner of metalliferous mines would also have to refer to the Metalliferous Mines Act. It was not necessary, therefore, to repeal those Acts, and they must leave to the mineowner the obligation of looking at them and learning his obligations. The mine owner had no difficulty in doing that, and it was not an unreasonable thing to say that in addition to the obligations the mine owner was under in the principal Acts, he was also under the obligations contained in this Bill. There was nothing so very wrong, therefore, in legislation by reference of this kind. His right hon. and learned friend had asked what there was wrong in the definition given in the Amendment of the noble Lord. He would reply, what was there wrong in his own definition?

Lord R. CECIL said there was nothing wrong in it, because it did not exist.

Sir W. ROBSON asked why, if there was nothing very wrong in that case, the noble Lord should object to it? He was anxious not to misconstrue or misunderstand what the noble Lord said, but he had referred to the fact that in one of these definitions of a mine there was a reference to machinery, and that there was no reference to it in dealing with quarries. What did it matter; it was quite immaterial.

Lord R. CECIL said perhaps he might be allowed to explain, as the hon. and learned Gentleman did not hear his argument. It was not the difference between a mine and a quarry he alluded to, but the difference between two different kinds of mines which the Government had lumped together.

SIR W. ROBSON replied that even supposing they were lumped together they were both brought in under the provisions in regard to the notification of accidents, and if they were to do that by going beyond the scope of this Bill and going into distinctions as to different classes of mines, there could be no use in those distinctions, because the Bill covered them all. He did not think the noble Lord had very much improved the old definition by his proposal. The provisions of this Bill would cover all mines and quarries which were anywhere dealt with, and he hoped the House would not be led astray by discussions of this character about legislation by reference, and apply them to the very simple provisions of a very simple Bill.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS inquired what was the meaning of Sub-section 2, Clause 2.

SIR W. ROBSON said the sub-section dealt with causing any fracture of the head or of any limb. Surely the hon. and learned Gentleman, who had had a very long experience, should know what that meant.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said that was not the sub-section he referred to, which was on the next page of the measure.

SIR W. ROBSON, turning to the page in question, said the sub-section ran—

> "The same sub-section shall be substituted for so much of Section 11 of the Metalliferous Mines Act 1872, as is repealed by this Act, both as respects the application of that section to metalliferous mines and as respects its application to quarries."

His hon. and learned friend said he did not understand that.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS said he did not say he did not understand it, but asked for explanation.

SIR W. ROBSON said that if his hon. and learned friend did understand it, he did not see why he should call upon him to explain it.

*MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University) said the hon. and learned Solicitor-General came into the House when the Government had had a full opportunity of fairly saying that they would endeavour to make the Bill clear in another place, and without having heard any of the speeches made in support of the Amendment, suggested that there was no difficulty in understanding the Bill. There were many difficulties, *e.g.*, whether a place was or was not a quarry. Let them take the case of coprolite works, it was a matter of the greatest difficulty to find out whether a particular pit came under this Act or not, and to determine the question would require most careful research. The landowner, whom the Solicitor-General said would know without any trouble, would know as much about the matter as the Solicitor-General knew about Sub-section 2 of Clause 2 of the Bill. In his opinion this was an exceedingly bad case of legislation by reference, as was shown by the passage which the Solicitor-General himself read. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred, whether lawyers or not, would not understand it. Nobody objected to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone and no possible harm could be done to anybody by making the matter clear by the insertion of the clause.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said objection was taken to it. There was an objection to the non-insertion of the penalties.

MR. RAWLINSON said that at all events there was no objection to it except with regard to the non-insertion of penalties. He had the greatest doubt as to whether that was necessary at all, and fifty lawyers could be found on one side and fifty on the other out of a hundred with regard to that question. But if it was necessary there was not the slightest difficulty in inserting two lines in the House of Lords to put the matter right. He thought the attitude the Government had taken up was due simply to Departmental pride.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) wished to say a word in support of the Bill. As far as the workpeople to whom this Bill would apply were concerned, they perfectly well understood its provisions and agreed with them. They had fully discussed the matter, and considered the Bill to be a satisfactory solution of the difficulty which it proposed to deal with. As to the question of legislation by reference, he thought that the discussion between legal gentlemen on both sides of the House should not be allowed to obstruct a measure of this importance. [Cries of "Oh."] Well, he thought it would be obstructing it, and if allowed to continue might tend to delay and possibly to defeat the measure. Of course, he recognised that that was the business of the Opposition, and he supposed they would claim it as a victory if, by challenging the drafting of the measure, they succeeded in defeating the measure itself; but the working men wanted the Bill, and did not wish that it should be defeated, or a victory gained by the Opposition at their expense. They would, therefore, like to see the Bill pass.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 41, Noes, 231. (Division List No. 47.)

AYES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
Balcarres, Lord
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Du Cros, Harvey
Evans, Samuel T.
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm's
Houston, Robert Paterson
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Water
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Watt, H. Anderson
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. F. E. Smith.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worcs.)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss'h.
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset)
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster

Lambert, George
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
McKenna, Reginald
Maddison, Frederick
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. George Whiteley and
Mr. J. A. Pease.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee) considered.

*MR. SPEAKER said that the three new clauses† standing in the names of the hon. Member for the Ecclesall division of Sheffield, the hon. Member for South West Bethnal Green, and the hon. Member for Northampton, respectively, were out of order because they proposed to lay an increased charge on the rates, which could not be done on the report stage of a Bill.

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† The new clauses referred to were as follows:

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: To move the following Clause:—"The words 'in which he has completed not less than three years approved service' contained in Section 4, Subsection 4, of The Police Act, 1890, are hereby repealed."

MR. PICKERSGILL: To move the following Clause:—"All periodic payments regularly made to a constable for his services as such, whether ordinary or special, but not including allowances in lieu of emoluments in kind, shall be treated as part of his pay and shall be taken into account in calculating pension."

DR. SHIPMAN: To move the following Clause:—"Where a constable has the free user of a house, the money value of such user shall be included in his annual pay and be pensionable on retirement."

Amendments proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, at beginning, to insert 'Where such a direction is given."

"In line 22, to leave out 'a' and insert 'the.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

*DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton) moved (in line 24 of Clause 1) to leave out "shall not," and insert "may, if such continuous service extend to three years." He said he moved this Amendment in Committee and was not very successful there, but he hoped it would commend itself to the House as an Amendment which would do justice to a large body of men who were deserving of every support. The Bill itself in its first clause said that the police authority might direct that the pension to which a policeman was entitled after serving a number of years should be practically fixed, and that if he continued to serve he should not be liable to certain forfeitures under the Police Act of 1890. This was a sort of plum offered to the police to continue to serve after they had become entitled to a pension. The Amendment related to Sub-section 3, which said that, if in order to induce men to continue on in their service they should receive extra pay, that pay should not be taken into consideration in order to increase the pension.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the effect of the Amendment of the hon. Member is to lay an increased charge on the rates. It may possibly do so. If that is so, and I think it is, the Amendment of the hon. Member is out of order.

DR. SHIPMAN: May I point out it is optional? It gives an optional power to increase the charge.

MR. SPEAKER: If there is any option to increase the charge we must assume that occasionally that option will be exercised.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said he would move the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Kingston, in his absence, as it seemed a reasonable one and the Government were prepared to accept it. It was clearly right that if the extra pay was not to be pensionable, so also it should not be subject to any deduction for pension purposes. That was the intention of the Bill, and the Amendment was really a drafting Amendment which would make a little clearer the object in view.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1 line 26, at end, to add the words 'and no rateable deductions shall be made from such extra pay under Section 15 of the Police Act, 1890.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendment agreed to.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) moved to leave out in Clause 2 the words, "the police authority shall, and if he," and insert "or." He said the Amendment had been rendered necessary by something which had happened since this Bill was considered by the Grand Committee. Section 2 of the Bill was drawn and was considered by the Grand Committee upon the assumption that the law was that, within the meaning of the principal Act, service must be continuous in order to rank for pension. At that time that was the decision of the Court of Appeal, but since then a case had been carried to the House of Lords, and the House of Lords had reversed the judgment of the Court of Appeal and of the Court below. The law, therefore, now was different from what it was assumed to be when this clause was considered, and the Amendment of which he had given notice was simply intended to carry out the law as declared by the House of Lords. As the Clause stood it provided that it should be at the option of the police authority to reckon discontinuous service. The House of Lords had declared that service, whether continuous or discontinuous, must rank for pension. He did not think he need pursue the subject further, as he understood the Amendment was recognised as being just by the Government.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, lines 3 and 4, to leave out, 'police authority shall, and if he,' in order to insert 'or.'"

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said the purport of this Amendment had been accurately stated by the hon. Member, and it was unnecessary for him to amplify it. The Government were glad to accept the Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendments proposed—

"In page 2, line 5, to leave out the words 'may, if they think fit,' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

"In page 2, line 26, leave out the words 'called out,' and insert the word 'required.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL explained that the Amendments to Clause 5 standing in his name were consequential. The object of the clause was as follows. Cases had occurred in which chief constables had remained in office to a very advanced age. Instances had even been known of chief constables over the age of eighty, and standing joint committees of counties and watch committees of towns were generally on very good terms with their chief constables, and were unwilling to dismiss them; consequently, these very undesirable cases had arisen. There had been a general desire, except perhaps on the part of some of the chief constables, that the Civil Service rules of compulsory retirement at sixty-five should be applied, and Clause 5 of the Bill effected that. Cases, however, had come to their knowledge of superintendents and deputy chief constables to whom its provisions might also with great advantage apply, and the purpose of this Amendment was to make the whole clause apply not merely to chief constables but also to any officer of police above the rank of inspector.

Amendments proposed—

"In page 3, lines 16 and 17, to leave out the words 'chief officer of police,' and insert the words 'constable above the rank of inspector.'"

"In line 18, to leave out the word 'officer's' and insert the word 'constable's.'"

"In line 20, to leave out the word 'officers' and insert the word 'constable's.'"

"In line 23, to leave out the words 'chief officer of police appointed' and insert the words 'constable holding a rank above that of inspector.'"

"In line 24, at end, to insert '(2) Where a constable is compelled to retire under this section, and is not entitled without a medical certificate to retire and receive a pension, he shall be entitled to receive such a pension or may be granted such a gratuity as he would have been entitled to receive or as might have been granted to him had he then retired on a medical certificate.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time and committed for to-morrow.

LOCAL REGISTRATION OF TITLE (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange), in moving the Second Reading, said the Bill was one of a purely technical character to make provision for a legal difficulty which had arisen in connection with the administration of the local registration of title in the county of Cork. He should not have thought it necessary to say anything to the House about it, but notice of Motion that the Bill be read that day six months having been put down by the Members for Dublin University, he though he ought to explain briefly the object of the Bill and what the necessity for it was. It really was intended to supply a *clausus omissus* in the Registration of Title Act of 1891 which escaped notice until it was discovered by the law officers of the late Government when advising on a matter towards the end of last year. The way it arose was this. The Act of 1891 provided by Section 4, Sub-section 2, that there should be for each county in Ireland a local Registration Office, and the 5th Sub-section provided that—

> "Each local office shall, subject to the direction and control of the Registrar of Title in such manner as shall be prescribed, be under the management and control of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace of the county. But if such person is not, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, qualified to discharge the duties of the office, such office shall, subject as aforesaid, be under the management and control of such other person, being a solicitor, as shall be appointed by the Lord Chancellor for that purpose."

The Government of the day appointed as Clerk of the Peace for the East Riding the late Mr. O'Grady, and no practical difficulty arose, because the Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding was a very old man, who made no claim to the office, and he was considered incapable of discharging the duties. The important point for the House to remember was that one register was established for the entire county of Cork, and one person was appointed registrar. In the county of Cork there were two officials who fulfilled the requirements of the Act—namely, the Clerk of the Peace and Crown for the city and East Riding of the county, and the Clerk of the Peace and Crown for the West Riding, the latter of whom was styled Clerk of the Peace and Crown for the county of Cork. In 1891 an Order in Council declared that until further Order the local registration office for the county of Cork should be under the management and control of the Clerk of the Peace for the East Riding, and the duties were from that time discharged by Mr. O'Grady who filled this office. Mr. O'Grady died in 1905, and Mr. Wright succeeded him as Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the city and East Riding of the county of Cork. An Order was made on the 1st of September, 1905, appointing Mr. Wright to the office of Registrar, and the appointment was subject to the same infirmity as the previous Order appointing Mr. O'Grady. Then Mr. Fitzgerald, the Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding, submitted that he was the proper person to be appointed, on the ground that he was Clerk of the Crown and Peace of and for the County of Cork, and the Law Officers of the day advised that both Clerks of the Peace were entitled to act for their respective ridings, and that it was not possible for the executive Government to select one of them only; in other words, that the Order of 1891 was invalid. It was necessary, therefore, to have a separate registry for each riding, and steps were taken to make Bandon the centre for the West Riding, and Cork the centre for the East Riding. That was the condition of affairs when the matter came before the Law Officers of the present Government. It was found that extreme inconvenience would be caused by this division. A good many farms were partly in one riding and partly in the other, and it would have been necessary that such farms should be registered in both ridings, and as regarded the future, when transactions in land took place, it would be necessary to search both registers, as there was nothing on the existing register to show in which riding any particular land was situated. It was provided in the Bill that there should be only one local registry for the county, situated in the city of Cork, and the Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding was selected as the registrar. He thought the House would see that there was every reason for that selection. The Order in Council dated March 1, 1879, which created the two offices, constituted a Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the city of Cork and the East Riding of the County, and a Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the West Riding, the latter being appointed under the style and title of Clerk of the Crown and Peace of and for the County of Cork. Under that Order the Clerk of the Peace for the East Riding discharged certain distinct duties in connection with that riding only, and the Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding had to discharge all the other duties connected with the entire county. Under the Order of March 1st, 1879, the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the City of Cork and the East Riding received a salary of £1,000, and the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the West Riding £800. The Clerk of the Peace for the East Riding was by virtue of his position as Clerk of the Peace for the City the local registrar in bankruptcy, for which he received an additional £250 per annum, and this work must take up a considerable portion of his time. The Clerk for the East Riding received for his bankruptcy work £250 a year, and altogether he had £1,250 a year. If he was appointed also local registrar of title he would receive £1,450 a year as against £800 received by the other officer. It seemed to him, therefore, that it would have been unreasonable to select of these two officials the one with the larger duties and greater salary, and to deprive of the office the one with more leisure time and a smaller salary. So by the Bill they provided that the Clerk for the West Riding was to be the official appointed. And so strong was the case apparently in favour of that view that he understood the Clerk for the West Riding was advised by a very eminent counsel in Ireland that he was entitled to that appointment.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Did not the right hon. and learned Gentleman advise him he was not?

*MR. CHERRY replied that he advised him, following the advice given by his right hon. friend opposite, that it was impossible under the present law to deal with him as being the person entitled to the office. That advice was given by an officer of the late Government, and they adhered to it. But it would be very unsatisfactory to leave the matter in that position. It would be a highly inconvenient arrangement, merely for the convenience or for the sake of two officials, unnecessarily to divide the register of the county and to set up two registers where for the last fifteen years there had been one register alone. The third clause of the Bill merely provided that acts done prior to the passing of the Act by either Clerk of the Peace should be valid, because there had undoubtedly been some irregularity in the proceedings from the beginning, and it was doubtful whether there was any person who could legally discharge the duties. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

SIR EDWARD CARSON said this Bill required explanation not upon questions of technical detail to which the learned Attorney-General had treated them, but in regard to the fact that the Irish Government were attempting by it to perpetrate a gross injustice and a gross job. The Chief Secretary was well aware of the feeling that existed in Ireland about this measure, and he was purposely absent upon this occasion because he was ashamed of the Bill, and before he concluded he thought every man in the House who heard him, and who without prejudice weighed the matter, would see that a dirtier piece of work had not been perpetrated by any Government. The Attorney-General had said that doubts had arisen as to who was to be appointed to this particular office.

*MR. CHERRY: No person can be specially appointed. The Act provides that the person holding a particular office is to do the work.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he would relate the facts. The Local Registration of Title Act was passed in 1891, and under it the Clerks of the Crown and Peace in Ireland were to be appointed the local registrars of title. Upon the passing of the Act, there being two such Clerks in the county of Cork, the Judge who passed the Act, who was then Attorney-General for Ireland and now Mr. Justice Madden, in conjunction with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, determined that the proper person to appoint in Cork was the Clerk for the city of Cork and the East Riding, because he had the city of Cork under his jurisdiction, which was by far the largest part in relation to the work to be done. Mr. Standish O'Grady held the office from 1892 down to last year, when he died. The Liberal Government which was in power from 1892 to 1895 never questioned the Order then made by the Lord Chancellor and Judge Madden. Mr. Standish O'Grady happened to be a Catholic and no question was raised about him. Last year the Under-Secretary, Mr. J. B. Doherty, wrote to Mr. Henry T. Wright, a Crown Solicitor who he believed was a man of great eminence in his profession, saying he had been nominated subject to certain conditions and stating —

> "You will become by virtue of your being Clerk of the Crown and Peace the local registering authority, and be entitled under Section 7 of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act 1891, to such increase of salary for additional duties imposed upon you by the Act as the Lord Chancellor with the consent of the Treasury may direct."

He asked the House to note that in making the offer of that appointment to Mr. Wright, one of the inducements held out by the Government was that Mr. Wright was also to perform the duties and have the salary of the Registrar of Titles.

*MR. CHERRY: The right hon. Gentleman advised that that was irregular and illegal.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): What was the date of that letter?

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The 29th August, 1905. On those conditions the offer was accepted by Mr. Wright, who gave up a most lucrative practice and also the appointment of Crown Solicitor for Cork County. On September 1st the Lord Chanceller handed him a document confirming the appointment. Mr. Wright entered upon his duties there and then. The right hon. Gentleman had said this was a Bill of a merely technical character. It was a Bill to take away an appointment conferred under the hand of the Lord Chancellor, and what the the House was asked to do was to cancel the late Lord Chancellor's appointment—

*MR. CHERRY: No.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Simply because there had been a change of Government. He ventured again to say that a dirtier piece of work had never been attempted in the House of Commons. The Attorney-General had said there was a flaw in the appointment.

*MR. CHERRY: It was discovered by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (pointing to the hon. and learned Member for Dublin University), and I challenge him to deny it.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he asked the right hon. Gentleman the other day, would he allow the matter to be brought to the courts of justice to be determined, and what was the answer? "No; it would take too much time. Let my Bill come on, and let my big battalion come down here. They will far more easily get over a difficulty of this kind than the courts of justice." That was a nice denial of justice by the chief Law Officer of the Crown in Ireland. Would the Attorney-General say that, because his opinion differed from that of a Lord Chancellor and a judge of the High Court, it was justice to this man that he should be deprived of the opportunity of placing his case before the legal tribunals of the land? The Attorney-General knew that this was a job; he knew that he dared not let it go before the courts. He knew he had been invited to do so, and he would not allow it, because, as he (Sir E. Carson) would explain later, it was all a part of another and a larger transaction. But, assuming for a moment that there was a flaw in this appointment, some one had to be appointed to the office. Did the Attorney-General deny that?

*MR. CHERRY: Yes I do. The Act says that it is a particular official who is to discharge the duties—that the person who holds a particular office is to discharge the duties.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Exactly; and so that is the case now. But what did the Attorney-General proceed to do? He gave the Attorney-General the full benefit of what he had just said; but what the Attorney-General proposed to do was to take the appointment away from the man who, at all events, was attempted to be appointed, and who had given up his office as Crown Solicitor and his private practice on the suggestion of the Lord Chancellor and a judge of the High Court that he would be entitled to the office, and to attach to the office a man who had no claim to it. He asked the Attorney-General whether that man had any claim to it?

*MR. CHERRY: Yes, he had a claim.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he had a letter in his possession from the Under-Secretary in Dublin Castle to Mr. Wright, dated March 2nd, after the time when the hon. and learned Gentleman became Attorney-General. That letter stated—

> "Adverting to previous correspondence in reference to the office of local registration of titles; I am directed by the Lord-Lieutenant to inform you that the matter has been again referred to the Law Officers of the Crown, and they advise that neither Mr. Wright nor Mr. Fitzgerald as Clerk to the Crown and the Peace for the county and the city of Cork and East Riding of the County of Cork is so entitled to the office."

So that what the Attorney-General said was that, having himself advised that this gentleman had no claim to the office, he wanted to turn out the man who had been appointed and put in a man whom he admitted had no claim to the office. Now, he put this question to the Attorney-General, did the hon. and learned Gentleman deny Mr. Wright's competence to perform the duties?

*MR. CHERRY: No.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Does he deny Mr. Wright's abilities?

*MR. CHERRY: I know nothing about the one gentleman or the other.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said he thought the Attorney-General might be generous to the man to whom he was going to do this wrong. Did he deny Mr. Wright's position? Did he deny that in the service of the Government Mr. Wright had discharged his duties with the greatest ability and the greatest possible courage?

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): This is a cross-examination.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that though he had never met Mr. Wright, he had always heard of him as a gentleman of the highest position in his profession. He would tell the House the whole of the matter of which this was the crown and coping-stone. Mr. Wright, as a Crown Solicitor in Ireland, had from time to time had to undertake very unpleasant duties, and last year, especially, with reference to police matters which had raised a great deal of feeling and riot in Ireland. That gentleman had to ask a bench of magistrates to return for trial a number of men who were so engaged. The chairman of the bench happened to be a justice by virtue of his being chairman of a county council; his name was Mr. George Howard. When the matter came before the bench the magistrates refused to adjudicate upon it, and adjourned the case for four months. At the end of that time they adjourned it again, and then Mr. Wright had to make application to the King's Bench to compel the magistrates to adjudicate upon it. When the order came down to them, they proceeded to adjudicate upon it by convicting the parties charged of a common assault, which they had not the least power or authority to do. Then another order had to be got from the King's Bench Division to set aside that conviction, and eventually the whole proceeding was set aside, and costs were given against the magistrates. What followed? On the change of Government the magistrate against whom two orders had been got for illegality was promoted to be a Land Commissioner, solely in consequence of his action on that occasion. If he was informed rightly, the Attorney-General could tell the House that the costs given against that magistrate by the King's Bench Division were forgiven.

* MR. CHERRY: No.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Have they been paid?

* MR. CHERRY: I am not aware whether they have been paid or not; but I know they have not been forgiven.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that this gentleman who broke the law was appointed a Land Commissioner, and Mr. Wright, who was his opponent in all these proceedings and who upheld the law, was deposed from his office. That was the sole and whole object of the Bill. He maintained that it was a disgraceful Bill, and that the absence of the Chief Secretary was due to that fact. The Attorney-General could not produce any precedent for a Bill of this kind. If there was any question of a flaw in the appointment of this gentleman, by all means let a Validating Bill be passed. The Bill before the House, if passed, would be nothing more nor less than the record of a public scandal. He ventured to tell the Attorney-General that whoever had put upon him this dirty trick in the early stages of his experience of his office was not at all his best friend, and if he was prepared to lend himself to carrying out such enactments as this he would find that he would not, when he demitted office, leave it in the same dignified position in which he found it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that this was an exceedingly interesting debate. When he came into the House he wondered to see so many Ulster Members present, and he knew that there was something afoot. When he saw both the Members for Trinity College in their places he really could hardly believe that a matter affecting the county of Cork could have produced such an impresion on those gentlemen. Then he learned from the late Solicitor-General for England that this was a "job," and he at once understood what had assembled the hosts from the North of Ireland. The late Solicitor-General had used curious language. He had called this "a dirty and disgraceful job." He did not object to the language, but it struck him as being rather strong. What were the real facts? On Mr. Standish O'Grady's death in 1905 a new appointment had to be made, and, rightly or wrongly, Mr. Wright, whom he agreed was an eminent solicitor and a man of the highest character, was appointed. Was Mr. Wright legally appointed to the office? That was the point they ought to settle before they came to any question of its being a disgraceful job. He had a copy of the Law Officer's opinion upon that appointment, the opinion of the junior Member for Trinity College concurred in by that eminent lawyer Lord Atkinson, dated October 25, 1905. They said that the position which had arisen was a peculiar and difficult one, and they thought that upon the true construction of the statute and order there must be two appointments to the office of the Registry of Land Titles. Therefore the appointment of one officer was *ultra vires* because there ought to have been two appointments. The Bill proposed to amend that illegality. A Tory gentleman was appointed illegally, and yet hon. Members opposite talked of jobs. Was not the whole country carried on by jobs?

SIR EDWARD CARSON: You ought to know.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that the right hon. Gentleman knew as well as he did that no office with a salary attached had ever been allowed to go to a man who did not agree with his party. The whole country had been full of jobs for the last twenty years. [A NATIONAL MEMBER: And a bad job they have made of it.] The Bill simply proposed to amend the illegality. That was the whole matter, and he was really astonished at the right hon. Gentleman using such language.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: I am not astonished at you.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he had had discussions with the right hon. Gentleman before, but would hon. Members opposite who were Mr. Wright's friends tell the House under what circumstances this illegal appointment was made, and whether it was known to be illegal at the time it was made? The whole question seemed to him to be really a very simple matter and one which certainly ought not to prevent the Bill from being read a second time. An illegal appointment was made. Did those who made it know it was illegal? Was it a job? Further, was there anything done after the legal opinion of the late Attorney-General and Solicitor-General that it was illegal?

SIR EDWARD CARSON: There is no such opinion. Let the matter be sent to the Courts; that is the way to test it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said it was the duty of the law officers to advise the Government, and they had advised that this was illegal. Did the late Government do anything to put it right? No. With that opinion of their own law officers in their hands they sat tight, and so did Mr. Wright. All that the Bill sought to do was to bring order out of confusion. Meanwhile the public had been suffering while all this fight was going on between the lawyers; many purchasers of farms could not get their titles. If it was going to be a question of discussing jobs he warned the House from his experience that the discussion might become interminable. He did not think it fair that the right hon. Gentleman should bring in the Wintergrass case, in which Mr. Wright only did his duty. Why should the right hon. Gentleman attack Mr. Howard? He was just as high-minded a man as Mr. Wright, and he was elected Land Commissioner because he was one of the very best out of the thirty-two candidates that sought the office. He was appointed for that reason and for no other, and it was rather too bad to embroil him in this matter. If there was a job there were two of them: one the appointment of Mr. Wright, and another, according to the right hon. Gentleman, in the appointment under this Bill.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down either had not had time to read his brief or had not been supplied with proper materials.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have no brief.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said that as the hon. Gentleman had done him the honour to refer to an opinion which he had given, and had expressed the view that in bringing in this Bill the Government were only acting upon the advice of the late law officers of the Crown, perhaps he might be allowed to assure the House that there was not one single particle of truth in that statement. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland, in his keenness in this matter, had handed to an hon. Gentleman sitting below the gangway documents which he had declined to place upon the Table of the House. These included an opinion given by himself and Lord Atkinson on October 25th last. He hoped to show that the hon. Gentleman opposite had, probably unconsciously, completely misrepresented the purport of that opinion; but the right hon. Gentleman opposite who had done the same, had not the same excuse for doing so. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well what that opinion was, because, before pressure was brought to bear upon him to alter his views and to bring in this Bill, which was a complete revolution of the views which he first formed of this question he affirmed the opinion that had previously been given by his late colleague and himself. He would explain to the House very briefly—because the matter was a technical one—what was the position that had arisen, and what was the difficulty which had to be met, as he was confident that when hon. Gentlemen opposite knew the truth of this scandalous job they would not soil their fingers with it. What was the position on October 25th last year, when the late law officers were consulted? There had always been a separate Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the East Riding of the county of Cork, as distinguished from the West Riding of the county, and the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the East Riding always had attached to his office the clerkship of the peace for the city of Cork. In 1891 when the Local Registration of Title Act was passed a provision was inserted that the local registrar of titles should be the gentleman who for the time being occupied the position of Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the county in which the appointment was made. In 1891 when the first appointment became necessary under that Act, the then Lord Chancellor, (Lord Ashbourne) construing it to the best of his ability, came to the conclusion that the clerk for the East Riding, having the clerkship for the Crown and Peace for the city of Cork, was the proper person of the two to occupy this post. He (Mr. Campbell) did not stop to consider whether that was right or wrong, but a well known Roman Catholic solicitor practising in Cork at that time, Mr. Standish O'Grady, was appointed by Lord Ashbourne to the position of local registrar of title under that Act. Within a year a Liberal Government came into office and Lord Ashbourne was succeeded by Lord Chancellor Walker. That Liberal Government remained in office for a number of years, and during all that time while Mr. O'Grady occupied the same position which Mr. Wright filled to-day his appointment was never challenged by Lord Chancellor Walker or the Liberal law officers of the day. He hoped and believed that Lord Chancellor Walker was in no way privy to this disgraceful Bill and had never sanctioned it. Again, in 1894, Mr. Fitzgerald was appointed Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the West Riding, and yet, although according to the right hon. Gentleman he had some sort of grievance, he had never discovered it, and had never put in any claim or suggestion that there was anything wrong in the appointment of Mr. Standish O'Grady. Mr. O'Grady occupied the appointment without challenge or demur from any quarter until his death in 1905. What would the House think of the statement of the Attorney-General for Ireland —who was supposed to be the leader of his profession—that he knew nothing whatever of the position or ability of Mr. Wright in face of the fact that that gentleman was one of the leading solicitors in Ireland for thirty years, and for ten years under a Liberal Government as well as under a Unionist Government had served his country with great courage and ability as Crown Solicitor for the entire county of Cork? On September 1st, 1905, Mr. Wright received a letter from the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland asking him would he surrender his Crown Solicitorship and his private practice in consideration of his being appointed Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the East Riding of Cork and the city of Cork, and on the condition expressly stated that he also was to be local registrar of titles. He accepted the office on those conditions. In

October the question was raised by the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the West Riding as to whether Mr. Wright was entitled to the registrarship for the entire county, and the matter was referred to the law officers. The law officers advised that the true and proper solution was that each of those gentleman represented a county in itself, because in the order which had been quoted by the Attorney General—part of which he had omitted—it was expressly stated that the two ridings of county Cork should be treated, for judicial and administrative purposes, as separate counties.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Why was not that seen to on Mr. Wright's appointment?

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said probably it was assumed that the precedent which had been set in the case of Mr. Standish O'Grady should be followed in his case. The advice given by the law officers was that, the two ridings being separate counties, Mr. Wright was entitled to be Registrar for the East Riding, and Mr. Fitzgerald for the West Riding. Would the House believe that the opinion given by himself and approved by his colleague and the then Lord Chancellor was approved of and adopted by the present law officers in the month of February last?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I take it that the present law officers agreed to the illegality.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said the hon. Member was under a misapprehension as to that. What they agreed to was that under the true construction of that Order in Council and the Act of Parliament the proper solution was to treat these two ridings as separate administrative counties, and to leave Mr. Wright as the local registrar of titles for the East Riding and to appoint Mr. Fitzgerald as the local registrar for the West Riding. On October 25th last that opinion of the then law officers of the Crown was communicated to Mr. Wright, and he, like the gentleman he was, at once agreed. He was perfectly satisfied, and acquiesced in it. On December 6th, the late Government went out of office, and on February 9th, the present law officers of the Crown, having considered the matter for six weeks, advised the present Government that the advice given by him (Mr. Campbell) was correct and that there should be two registrars of title, one for each separate riding of Cork. On February 9th a communication was made to Mr. Wright to that effect. What could be more unjust and unfair for the right hon. Gentleman opposite to pretend to the House that this Bill was to carry out the opinion given by himself in October last? Why had not the truth been told to the House? When this job was left to the Attorney-General and his colleagues and the Chief Secretary was ashamed to sit beside him, why did not the right hon Gentleman make a clean breast of it? The right hon. Gentleman had forgotten to tell the House that he had written to Mr. Wright that he was entitled to hold on to the East Riding and the city of Cork. On March 2nd, three weeks after February 9th, a letter was written to Mr. Wright telling him that the law officers had reconsidered their opinion. He wondered what pressure had been brought to bear in the meantime; he wondered whether the hon. Member for the city of Cork had intervened in this matter on behalf of his former election agent. The letter of March 2nd was as follows—

> "Adverting to previous correspondence on the subject of the arrangements to be made for the local registration of title for the county of Cork I am directed by the Lord-Lieutenant to inform you that the matter has been again referred to the law officers of the Crown. They advise that neither Mr. Wright nor Mr. Fitzgerald is Clerk of the Crown and Peace for Cork. In their opinion the Act of 1891 contemplated only a single office and prohibits a solution of the difficulty by the appointment of you and Mr. Fitzgerald as local registrar each for your own riding. The case appears to be one of *clausus omissus* to be dealt with by legislation."

Mr. Wright, when he received the letter, put upon it the only construction that he could, that the present Government were going to introduce legislation to carry out the opinion that had been given that Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Wright were jointly entitled to hold this office between them, and being left under that impression he took no steps to put his case before the Government. But Mr. Fitzgerald was not so inactive, and the result was the present Bill. The Bill introduced in this form expressly deprived Mr. Wright of any part or share in the registrarship of title of any part of the county of Cork, and put into the office the former election agent of the Member for the city of Cork, giving him not merely the local registrarship of the entire county of Cork, but throwing in the city of Cork, of which Mr. Wright was Clerk of the Crown and Peace. A more scandalous, unjustifiable, and indefensible job had never come up for the sanction of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman had sought to defend the proposal by saying that Mr. Fitzgerald had more duties to discharge in connection with the county than Mr. Wright. He entirely denied that. The salaries were fixed having regard to the responsibility and nature of the work, and those salaries showed that the position held by Mr. Wright was looked upon as the more responsible of the two. It came to this, that while for fourteen years a Roman Catholic gentleman was allowed to hold this position without challenge from any quarter in the city of Cork, under conditions identical to those of the office held by Mr. Wright, Mr. Wright, as a Protestant, had to be got rid of. Mr. Wright had done his duty in a way that earned for him the commendation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose when he was Chief Secretary and the commendation of several Chief Secretaries since, and because he discharged his duty with ability and courage he now had to be got rid of without a shred of compensation, and was to be deprived of the post in the faith of obtaining which he sacrificed his entire professional practice. That was to be done in the professed interests of efficiency and economy, but the Attorney-General knew that the only object of the Bill was to inflict a stigma on a public servant with a splendid record. The post was to be handed over to gentlemen about whom he would say nothing disparaging, except that Mr. Wright was in his profession considered to be head and shoulders above him. This gentleman, it was admitted, had no claim to the office, and Mr. Wright was not even to be allowed the ordinary right of a British subject to have the question decided in a Court of Law. Why was he refused this right? That was perhaps the most disgraceful part of the whole business. If the question was to be determined in a Court of law the job could not be carried out. That, then, was the whole of the disgraceful and squalid story. Though the Government by superior numbers forced the Bill through the House, it would never disgrace the Statute book of the country.

*CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said he desired first of all to call attention to a remark which fell from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who began his speech by referring to the large number of Ulster Unionist representatives who were present. He would just like to point out to the House that in the south and west of Ireland it was necessary frequently for the Protestant population to go to Ulster in order to have such a matter as that under discussion brought fairly and clearly before the House. The hon. Member for South Tyrone was favoured by the right hon. Gentleman who introduced this measure in a manner which they on the Opposition side of the House considered most unfair. They were all anxious to obtain the correspondence which had passed and the Law Officers' decision, and the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland was pressed to lay the Papers upon the Table. He declined to do so, although to-day they noticed that the Papers had been handed to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who immediately took them to the Leader of the Home Rule Party.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member is entirely wrong. I did not take any papers to the hon. and learned Member for Waterford.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: No, I have had no papers.

*CAPTAIN CRAIG said that at all events they had just been consulting together. Though they (the Ulster Unionist Party) did not know the person whom this Bill chiefly concerned—Mr. Wright—either personally or in any other way, but desired merely to see justice done, they had asked that these Papers should be laid on the Table of the House. On these grounds, and because the Chief Secretary was not present, he held that the House had been treated very badly, and the transaction in question was rightly described as a job. There had been similar instances in the House. There was the instance of the Rathmines and Rathgar Bill which the House refused to be sent upstairs. They had also seen similar tactics in regard to the Assistant Land Commissioners who had been sent away instead of being re-engaged as had hitherto been the custom. He put this particular Bill in the same category with the two instances he had mentioned. Were the Unionist Members for Ulster who had the Protestant interests of Ireland at heart to sit silent and not put the whole truth before the House? They were there for a duty, which he trusted his Ulster colleagues and he would never fail to discharge, namely, to protect what they considered was right, and to expose, where they could, what they considered was wrong. They wished in this matter to have the clearest light, and to have the Chief Secretary present in order to answer some of the questions in regard to which the Attorney-General for Ireland admitted he was unable to put the House in possession of full information. The representative of the Irish Government should be in his place when such an iniquitous Bill was brought before the House. Those who voted for the Bill as it stood would not do so on its merits, but purely and simply because they were called into the Division Lobby, many of them without having heard the arguments. If this and other Irish measures of the Government were the inauguration of a system of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas, it was certainly not governing Ireland justly or according to the ideas of legality. Sooner or later this sort of measure would recoil on the heads of the Government. A wrong would be done to a man who had done his duty fearlessly, and the Protestant people in that part of Ireland looked for the protection of this Protestant House.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said that absolutely no reply had been made to the grave and serious charges put forward, with the exception of a very lame and ineffective explanation by the Attorney-General, who had confessed that he was not conversant with all the facts. The hon. Member for South Tyrone—who now appeared to be looking forward to a more distinguished career in the future—had come to the assistance of the Government in regard to these most disreputable charges. After the very serious and grave charges which had been made they were entitled to demand from the Chief Secretary an answer. Therefore he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) formally seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Thomas Corbett.*)

The House divided: Ayes, 52; Noes, 251; (Division List No. 48.)

AYES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor CW
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Du Cros, Harvey
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Keswick, William
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareh'm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. T. L. Corbett and Mr. Charles Craig.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)

Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galw
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (MerthyrTydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil G. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W. Bateman (SomersetN
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembrok
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton underLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor

Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. George Whiteley and
Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question again proposed.

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said he could not say whether he was more indignant that this Bill had been brought before the House, or more deeply sympathetic with the Law Officer of the Government who had to introduce such a measure. He was sorry that the speeches of the two hon. and learned Members for Dublin University should have been delivered to a very limited audience, and it was because the House was now better filled that he would briefly recite why he and his friends felt so very indignant that this Bill had been introduced. The Bill had been characterised as a job. He ventured to call it one of the most glaring jobs that had ever been brought before the Imperial Parliament. A certain office under the Crown became vacant in September last, and it was duly filled up. No possible fault could be found with the gentleman appointed, and although a weakness in the appointment was subsequently discovered by the Law Officers of the late Government, the Law Officers of the present Government agreed to the solution suggested for the legalising of the appointment, and the present holder of the office was led to understand that a Bill would be introduced to put the matter right. No notice was given to him that it was proposed to remove him from office. There was a direct and close connection between the hon. Member for Waterford and this endeavour to put out of office one gentleman and to present it by legal enactment to quite another, and he wished the House fully to grasp how unreasonable and outrageous was the proposal, which was brought before the House in such a plausible manner. He had no fault to find with Mr. Fitzgerald or the manner in which he had fulfilled the duties of the office he at present held, but still less could fault be found with Mr. Wright, whom Mr. Fitzgerald was to supplant. He wished the House fully to gather that this change was taking effect because the Attorney-General was in the hands of the United Irish League in this matter. The only possible fault that could be found with Mr. Wright was that he was known to be a Protestant and a Unionist, and that in the furtherance of his duty to his King and country he had had to prosecute one to whom His Majesty's Government had recently given a distinct mark of preferment. He referred to Mr. Howard, who was lately appointed a land commissioner; he was a gentleman who had twice refused to fulfil the duties of the magistracy, and who had had to be ordered by the High Court to fulfil these duties in connection with distinct illegalities. This was the class of man to whom His Majesty's Government were willing to give substantial preferment. No possible fault could have been found with this Bill if it had been introduced to make it legal that there might be two registrars of title in the East and West Ridings of the county of Cork. But it was seriously proposed to remove from office Mr. Wright, who had been discharging the duties for the last five months. He thought the House had distinct reason to complain that the Chief Secretary was not present when this important debate was taking place. He was not prepared to believe that the Chief Secretary knew all the facts, because if they were known to him he was satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman would not stand by the Attorney-General and support him in connection with such an iniquitous measure as this. He did not expect support from the Nationalist Members in this matter. The incident showed the close connection between the Government and the forces of disloyalty in the south and west of Ireland. Were they to take this matter as a sample of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas? He only wished that the electorate of Great Britain could have the incident brought before them in all its fulness, because it would be a distinct eye-opener to them as to the way in which justice was being dispensed in Ireland. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had told the House that the appointments to all Government posts were jobs, and he could not help remembering that the hon. Gentleman not very long ago was glad to accept a responsible and well-paid position from the late Government. It was only when the late Government did not see fit again to include him that suddenly everything which the Unionist Party did was called a job or even something stronger. He did not think, therefore, that anything that might be said by the hon. Member for South Tyrone was likely to turn the House from its plain duty, which was to reject that Bill. He begged to move its rejection.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) seconded the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. He said he objected to the measure firstly because it wore the aspect of proscription of a political opponent. He objected to it also because he thought it was rather a breach of faith with an honourable man who had accepted an appointment from the late Government on certain very specific terms. Again, he objected to the Bill very strongly because he thought it was a very unfortunate precedent to ask the House, so largely composed as it was of Members not learned in the law, to decide what appeared to him to be a very difficult legal question. It was conceded on all hands—even by the hon. Member for South Tyrone—that Mr. Wright was a very meritorious gentleman, and up to September last he was a solicitor with one of the largest practices in Munster. One of the terms laid down in the letter conveying to him the offer of the position at Cork was that he would become the local registering authority and be entitled to such additional salary for the duties of that position as might be directed. The effect of the Bill now before the House would be to deprive him of £200 accruing from that source, which income he had before his eyes in accepting the appointment. It was said that there was some technical invalidity in the appointment. He could understand a Bill brought in to get over that difficulty, seeing that the man who was appointed had given up his private practice. Assuming that there was any error at all, which he doubted—because for years and years his predecessor held the position under the same conditions and nobody alleged that there was any illegality—this was a new precedent; an Act of Parliament ought to have been introduced to validate the appointment in regard to which there was a technical flaw. This Bill, however, was a measure to take away an appointment from a man who had received it and to give it to an absolute outsider. He would assume that there was a difficulty about appointing Mr. Wright, but the late Law Officers of the Crown so advised. The present Law Officers concurred that there was a difficulty because the county of Cork was divided for administrative purposes into two counties, East Riding and the West Riding. The late Law Officers suggested that as a technical breach of the law had arisen the obvious course to take was to appoint Mr. Wright for the East Riding and the other gentleman for the West Riding; in fact, that the inheritance should be divided between them. Mr. Wright admitted that that was a fair way out of the difficulty, and the Attorney-General and his colleagues conceded that it was a right and legal thing to do, and caused Sir James O'Doherty, the Under-Secretary, to write on the 9th of February to Mr. Wright, to the effect that the management and control of the Registration Office should be under him and Mr. Fitzgerald. That seemed a fair working arrangement, but the Bill before the House provided for a most unfair arrangement. On the 2nd March, the present Law Officers of the Crown were of opinion that neither Mr. Wright nor Mr. Fitzgerald was entitled to the office. The Attorney-General changed his opinion for the third time between the 2nd of March and the 13th of March, when this Bill was presented to the House. The Bill would establish a novel precedent, because it asked the House, composed of a large number of gentlemen who were not learned in the law, to decide a most difficult point of law. Moreover, the majority of the Members had not heard the debate.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): They were fortunate in that.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH said he entirely concurred. He had always been under the impression that the proper course to take in regard to such questions was to raise them before the Courts of law. The junior Member for Dublin University and Lord Atkinson both thought there was a doubt, and they devised a way out of the difficulty. Then the present Attorney-General and his learned colleague looked into the matter and gave two different opinions.

*MR. CHERRY: I beg your pardon. I gave only one opinion on this matter, and that opinion concurred with that of the right hon. Gentleman the late Solicitor-General.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH said he was sure the Attorney-General had stated what he believed to be correct, but the inference from the letter of the 9th February was that the Law Officers of the Crown concurred in the opinion given by their predecessors.

*MR. CHERRY assented.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH said that some one must have advised the Irish Government to adhere to the opinion of their predecessors. But on the 13th March they introduced this Bill. The question should be decided by a Court of Law, and not by a vote of the House of Commons. He was reminded of the old controversy which arose in the famous O'Connell trial, as to whether the lay Members of the House of Lords should take part in a division. The learned law Lords who heard the appeal strongly pressed on the lay Lords not to take part in a division on a pure question of law. The lay Lords did not do so, and walked out of the House, and he believed that from that day to this they had never taken part in a legal division; if they did so, they would reduce the administration of the law to a perfect scandal, because they would decide cases in which they had not heard one word of the arguments on either side. In this matter hon. Members who were quite incapable of understanding a question of law would flock into the lobbies and vote upon and decide this legal question, and by that means take away from a man an office to which he was appointed, and confer it on another man. He protested most strongly on this point, because it seemed to him it would create a most unfortunate precedent if the House of Commons were asked to decide what was primarily and properly a matter to be dealt with in a Court of law. If the Attorney-General was of opinion that Mr. Wright was not properly appointed, let him obtain a *quo warranto* against Mr. Wright, and let the Law Courts decide the question. If this were done both he and the hon. Member for South Tyrone would be satisfied—

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the word 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Barrie.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he really felt bound to begin by apologising to the House for continuing by even a few words the extremely instructive and futile debate which had been taking place for the last three hours. There were, he thought, forty-two orders upon the order paper, and the Bill which they were now discussing was the fourth of those orders. The discussion began at four o'clock, and it was now seven; all that time had been wasted upon this Bill, and yet an hon. Gentleman above the gangway told him, or rather menaced him with the intimation that the discussion might last for several more hours. The Opposition Benches above the gangway, occupied by hon. Members from Ulster, were crowded and enthusiastic for the first time in the history of the Ulster Party for nearly twenty years. He saw every one of them in his place for the first time, and though he had listened to many eloquent and vehement speeches from the late Attorney-General for Ireland, who held that position for three weeks, the eloquence and vehemence which he had brought to the discussion of this Bill caused all his previous performances to sink into insignificance. Did the House, however, realise what all this magnificent display meant? These hon. Gentlemen declared that the Union was in danger, and disloyalty was on top in Ireland. But what really was the cause of all this? A job of £200 a year in Ireland. Yet these hon. Gentlemen who declared that for the good of England, and for the good of Ireland, this Parliament should have the direction and the settlement of all English, Irish, Scotch, and Imperial matters, were not ashamed to come and take up three hours of the valuable time of the Imperial Parliament in discussing a question of whether one lawyer or another should get a job of £200 a year. He did not wish to be misunderstood when he passed that criticism. He was delighted, because he regarded every debate which took place upon Irish affairs as an educational debate, and he was sure that the education of the House proceeded much more rapidly under the instruction of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway than it would do from any speeches which could be delivered from below the gangway. This discussion, indeed, showed the true inwardness of Unionism, to which other names were given, such as loyalty, patriotism, Imperialism, but it all came down to jobs. What briefly were the facts of the question? He said "briefly," because the matter had been discussed as if it were one of great complexity. It was a very simple case as he understood it. The last Government before they went out of office indulged in what he thought he might describe without exaggeration as one of the most indecent orgies and debaucheries of jobbery in the history of politics, and that was saying a good deal. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, one of the members for Dublin University, made himself Attorney-General for three weeks, and the Government were so eager on their jobbery that they actually did not wait till the places were vacant before they appointed men to them. There was a gentleman called Wade, and there was an impending, but not an actual vacancy in one of the legal Land sub-Commissionerships. He believed the existing holder of the office had still two or three months to run, but the right hon. Gentleman and his friends were determined that none of their friends should be forgotten, and without waiting for the end of the term of office of the existing legal sub-Commissioner, they appointed Mr. Wade in his place. When the present Government came into office they, of course, discovered what everybody in Ireland knew before, viz., that the appointment was illegal and they withdrew it, but with as much consistency as one could expect from any Government—Liberal or Conservative—they had reappointed him since, although only temporarily. One of the late Government's little jobs before they left office was to appoint Mr. Wright to the clerkship of the peace for the East Riding of Cork, thus adding to that gentleman's other emoluments £200 a year. It was then discovered by the late Government that this was an illegal appointment. [Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL laughed.] The right hon. Gentleman laughed, but he was laughing at his own opinion. It reminded him of an occasion when a rival dramatist of Oliver Goldsmith said of his "She Stoops to Conquer" that the comedy of Oliver Goldsmith did not make him laugh, and Goldsmith retorted that the tragedies of his rival did make him laugh. He had often laughed at the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman, especially those which dealt with tragedies, but he did not know that the right hon. Gentleman would come to laugh at them himself. The right hon. Gentleman discovered that this appointment was illegal, and that this man had got a job illegally, and all this fire and fury to which the House had been listening was because the present Government did not continue the office to which this man was appointed illegally, and because this poor suffering man was left with a miserable salary of only £1,200 a year. Hon. Members shed tears of blood for this poor pauper with £1,200 a year, who he should say had very little to do for it. Because the Government found themselves in a position in which they were unable to continue this man in his office without illegality, they had brought in a Bill to unite in one person these offices for the two Ridings of the county of Cork. He understood that the appointment was not to be given to Mr. Wright but to Mr. Fitzgerald, and in this connection he might allude to the fact that something had been said about the United Irish League. It had been represented that the origin of this action by the Government was due to that body, but not a single Member of the Party led by his hon. friend the Member for Waterford had interfered and his hon. friend had not interfered but had declined to interfere in all these questions of rival jobs. He (Mr. O'Connor) was not interfering because he cared for Mr. Fitzgerald. He did not care whether Mr. Fitzgerald or Mr. Wright had this job; it was nothing to do with him. Mr. Fitzgerald, moreover, had nothing to do with the United Irish League, and was a Crown officer before that League came into existence. Mr. Fitzgerald received £800 a year, and when he obtained this post he would have £1,000, which would still be less by £200 than the salary received by this alleged victim of oppression. It was a cruel thing that the Protestantism of England should be appealed to for the purposes of upholding jobbery. He had great respect for all kinds of religious faith, if they were sincere, but to put one forward for the purpose of making capital in the interest of legal jobbery was a course which he thought would have the contempt of every honest man. In conclusion he congratulated the House, and especially the majority of the House, on the object lesson they had had of the high purposes of Unionism and the honest methods by which it was defended.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that those who, like himself, were Members of the last Parliament, would recall the eloquent speech made by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool upon the subject of an island called Dersey. On that occasion, for a purpose which was only ill concealed, the hon. Member occupied the House for an hour and twenty minutes, discussing certain wrongs which were supposed to have been inflicted upon the inhabitants of a small island which, up to that evening, had never been heard of in the House of Commons, and on this occasion the hon. Member had been endeavouring to carry out the same object, though he could not congratulate him upon the same success. The fact was the hon. Member had tried to lead the House away from the consideration of a serious case which demanded attention. It was a matter in which for purely Party purposes and in order to reward political services, opportunity had been taken of a legal quibble to dispossess a man who had as good a claim to the office as any man could have. If any disability did exist it was the duty of the Government, not to dispossess the individual, but to take the earliest opportunity of doing what was right and fair between man and man. What was right and fair in this case? The predecessor of Mr. Wright held this office for some fourteen years under more than one Government, and no one had suggested that he did not hold the office in a perfectly legal manner. At the end of that time Mr. Fitzgerald, or somebody on his behalf, suddenly raked up this point. In the meantime Mr. Wright had been appointed to the position. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division had tried to minimise the importance of the question by saying that an amount of only £200 a year was involved. But the extent of the emoluments of which the gentleman was to be deprived did not alter the facts of the case. It was immaterial whether the amount involved was £100 or £1,000 a year. A perfectly simple remedy existed for the difficulty. The Attorney-General said the man had been illegally appointed. They (the Ulster Unionists) maintained that his appointment was perfectly fair and legal. It was essentially a point which should be tried by a Court of law. The Attorney-General knew that the chances were that a Court of law would decide in favour of Mr. Wright, and that was one of the reasons why the Government had introduced this Bill. It was curious that almost the last scene before the House rose for the holidays took place in reference to a very similar case when he and his colleagues felt it to be their duty to bring before the House another instance of scandalous favouritism. The appointment of the five Land Commissioners was on all fours with the job to be perpetrated by this Bill. On that occasion the Chief Secretary had the decency to be in his place to hear the criticisms of his action. He was sorry to say that on this occasion he had not the same decency, although he knew the debate was coming on and that the dismissal of Mr. Wright had created a very strong feeling, not only in the north of Ireland, but throughout that country. He, of all people, should be present. Although the matter had been discussed at length after the speech of the Attorney-General and his lieutenant the Member for South Tyrone, no one had said a word in defence of the action of the Government, and he felt certain there was not a Member on the Ministerial Benches who could honestly say that what the Attorney General for Ireland proposed to do was fair. They had been told in numerous speeches by the Prime Minister and others that Ireland was to be governed according to Irish ideas, but if the ideas which were to prevail were such as had suggested the action about to be taken in this matter he could only say "God help Ireland!" Hon. Members below the gangway would in turn feel the screw if affairs in Ireland were to be carried on in the way they had been since the present Government came into power. Every politician would probably admit that when a position which was usually given as a reward for services rendered in politics became vacant, it should be given by the Party in power to one of their own friends, but every one would agree that the Government should in common decency wait until it became vacant, and should not, instead, resort to what was after all a legal quibble for the purpose of unseating a man. That was going further than he had ever heard of any political Party going before. He thought the position taken up by himself and his colleagues and other Members on the Unionist side of the House in this matter was amply justified. That the action taken by the Attorney-General for Ireland was most unfair was amply proved by the fact that the only speech made in defence of the action of the Attorney-General was made by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, whose opinion carried no weight in the House, and who intervened in the debate merely because he thought it was only right that a member of the Nationalist Party should take an interest in it. He sincerely hoped that by the leave of the House the right hon. and learned Attorney-General would be permitted to make some reply to the criticisms that had been passed upon this Bill, because it was most extraordinary that notwithstanding all those strong and well merited criticisms there had been nothing said on behalf of the Government except the meagre and misleading statement by the right hon. and learned Attorney-General. He also hoped hon. Members on the Liberal Benches would endeavour to look at this matter from a standpoint removed from politics. It seemed to him a gross and unjust use of the powers which the country had vested in the Government of the day, and he hoped hon. Members would realise that it was a serious matter. If affairs were allowed to be administered in this way there would be no security of tenure for any man holding such an office. When the division on the Second Reading took place he hoped hon. Members opposite would find themselves in the same lobby as himself and his friends.

*MR. CHERRY said he would not have intervened in this debate a second time but for the violent personal attack which had been made upon him by both Members for Dublin University. The senior Member had risen in his place and deliberately charged him (Mr. Cherry) with what the right hon. Member had called a dirty job. ["Hear, hear!"] That apparently was now accepted by other hon. Members. The right hon. Gentleman then said that the Chief Secretary was designedly absent; that he would not sit beside him (Mr. Cherry) while he did this dirty job. The first statement he would pass over. It was mere abuse. In the other allegations there was not the slightest truth whatever. The Chief Secretary, as the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well, was absent in Ireland discharging his duties there.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman state what those duties are?

*MR. CHERRY said he might tell the right hon. Gentleman for his satisfaction that the Chief Secretary was perfectly well aware of what this Bill was and how it was promoted, and that he had arranged with the Chief Secretary as regarded the charge of it in its passage through this House. The right hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Dublin University had said that he hoped and believed that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland—for whom, although he was a Law Officer of a Liberal Government, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have some respect—knew nothing about this Bill. He should like to tell the right hon. Gentleman that this Bill was prepared at the direct suggestion of the Lord Chancellor for Ireland, and under his direct supervision, and further he should like to tell the right hon. Gentlemen that he himself had nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the Bill, except to bring it before the House in his official capacity. It was prepared by the Lord Chancellor and the Solicitor-General, because these two eminent functionaries knew, as the right hon. Gentleman and he himself knew, that the Bill was absolutely necessary if they were not to introduce the greatest confusion into the whole legal system of Cork. The right hon. Gentleman had never denied the fact, pointed out by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that he advised that the previous arrangement was entirely illegal, and that the appointment of Mr. Wright to be the sole registering authority for the county of Cork was utterly illegal and invalid. What defence had been attempted of that appointment? When the invalidity was pointed out, what did the Law Officers of the late Government attempt to do? Instead of meeting the matter and appointing one person to do the duty they proceeded, in the eloquent words of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh, to divide the inheritance.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said he never gave any such advice as that. On the contrary, as the right hon. Gentleman ought to know, because he had his opinion before him, the advice he gave was that the county of Cork was divided into two parts, and that therefore each had a right to the appointment of its own candidate.

*MR. CHERRY said the right hon. Gentleman had apparently an entire disregard for the convenience of the whole county of Cork, because he must have known that nothing could be more inconvenient than to divide the county into two, and for no other reason than that Mr. Henry Wright might have £100 a year added to his stipend. For the sake of that the right hon. Gentleman wanted the rejection of the whole Bill, which was absolutely essential in the interests of every owner of land in the county of Cork The charge had been made that this was done at the suggestion of the Nationalist Members, but neither he nor any other member of the Government had had any communication with any of their number with reference to this matter. Not one of the Nationalist Members had said any thing in favour of Mr. Fitzgerald and against Mr. Wright, but he (Mr. Cherry) had had several communications from Gentlemen representing Ulster constituencies with reference to the terrible injustice the Government were perpetrating. In selecting the proper officials to do the work, he and his colleagues had known nothing personally of the two men. He never spoke to either of them, and he only knew that they had discharged their duties with regularity and fairness. He had no wish to promote one as opposed to the other. It was a matter of entire indifference to him and the other Law Officers who was selected, but they selected the most appropriate and proper person. If hon. Members wished to promote the other, let them bring it up in Committee, but that was no reason for objecting to the whole Bill. Let their opponents give any other reasons apart from personal reasons. The House did not want to hear about Mr. Wright's deeds before he became Clerk of the Crown and Peace. They wanted to take the two officers impartially with reference to the duties of their office. But throughout the whole course of the debate, they had had no clear and consistent suggestion as to what should be done. Did they want two gentlemen or one? Did they want to divide the county or not? What they would like apparently was for the Government to legalise the illegal appointment of the late Government. That was the most remarkable suggestion he had ever heard. The late Government made an appointment which was illegal, and now their successors were asked to bring in a Bill to validate that appointment. No one would suggest that, except a number of Irish Unionists.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us when he ceased to be an Irish Unionist.

*MR. CHERRY said he never was an Irish Unionist, but that had nothing to do with the question. There was another suggestion, that the two officers should be left to fight it out in the Law Courts as to who should be appointed. That would be a very profitable matter for some gentlemen because the litigation would be troublesome and long—it would probably last two years. In the meantime what would happen to registration of title in a county with hundreds of thousands of people?

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: What was done for fifteen years.

*MR. CHERRY said he did not wish to go into personal matters. He had carefully avoided them in moving the Second Reading and it was, he thought, most unpleasant to enter into the squalid disputes as to Roman Catholics and Protestants and their hundred or two hundred a year. This Bill was introduced because the Law Officers believed it to be necessary, and he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to deny that the Bill was necessary in the interests of justice in Cork. He did not think the arguments adduced by the Opposition were sufficient to warrant the House in rejecting the measure.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 237; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 49.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. P'ncr's, W
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cremer, William Randall
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W H (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardie, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hope, W Bateman (Somerset, N
Hudson, Walter
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans'a
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lea, Hugh Cecil (S. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)

Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,Sir W. D. (Colchester
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembr'ke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond,John E.(Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Rt. Hn.E.(Dundee)
Robertson,SirG. Scott(Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ross, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Scott,A.H.Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile Lnd)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor,Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas,Abel(Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke-on-Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Wason,Eugene(Clackmannan)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White,J.D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson,Henry J. (York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson,J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (S. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W.T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arnold-Forster,Rt.HnHughO
Balcarres, Lord
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell,J.H.M(DublinUniv.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, LordR. (Marylebone,E.)
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Heaton, John Henniker
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlingt'n
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Rothschild,Hn. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool,Walton
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col. W.H.(Lancashire
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C.B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Hugh Barrie and Mr. Charles Craig.

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 229; Noes, 34. (Division List No. 50.)

AYES.

Abraham,William(Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen,A.Acland(Christchurch)
Asquith,Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black,ArthurW.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce,J.A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWmJ(S.Pancras,W
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.

Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H (St. Pancras, N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hn. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George, A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Hudson, Walter
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelly, George D.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederick C.
Macnamarra, Dr. Thomas J,
MacVeagh, Charles (Donegal, E
MacVeigh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montague, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Captain Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'rgh, Central
Priestly, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverhmpton
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. George Whiteley and
Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
Balcarres, Lord
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Campbell, J. H. M (Dublin Univ.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E,
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane Fox, G. R.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell

Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)	Walker, Col. W.H. (Lancashire	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Hugh Barrie and Mr. Charles Craig.
Thornton, Percy M.	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart-	
Valentia, Viscount	Younger, George	

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

RESERVE FORCES BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TRANSFER OF TREASURY POWERS) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) [EXPENSES.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of any Expenses and allowances incurred under any Act of the present session to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901.—*Mr. Kearley.*

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

STATUTE LAW REVISION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

ALKALI, &c., WORKS BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

SUPPLY [29TH MARCH.]

Resolutions reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £490,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, &c., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Secretary of State for War to give his attention to the state of the accommodation at Fort George. It was disgraceful and of a most inadequate character. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see that the instruments and appliances provided in the military hospitals were of a satisfactory and up-to-date description, those now in use being of an antiquated character and a disgrace to our civilization. The military hospitals in some of the Native States of India, especially that of Gwalior, as well as those in Japan were in the matter of equipment far ahead of those in this country.

Resolution agreed to.

2. "That a sum not exceeding £819,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, &c., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 141,058 including 8,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

*MR. WEIR said that the answer he had received from the Secretary for War in regard to the despatch of the Seaforth Militia from Stornoway was extremely unsatisfactory.† The officer commanding at Fort George on the 2nd of April last ordered the Militia in the island of Lewis, numbering 700, to leave the Island by mail steamer. But the mail steamer could only carry 250 passengers, and seeing that 400 arrived in Stornoway on the 2nd April for embarkation, 150 of these poor fellows were left without any shelter or food. If such a thing could take place in time of peace, what might they expect from the War Office in time of war? This was not the first time the same sort of bungling had taken place. A few years ago 600 Militia were sent home from Cairo to the island of Lewis in winter, and had to travel from Kyle of Lochalsh to Stornoway in a steamer quite inadequate for the purpose. The result was that not a few of them died from cold and exposure. He thought the right hon. the Secretary for War had treated the Seaforth Militia very badly that day in answering his Question. He gave notice that, at the proper time, he would move the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary. But he wished to refer to the wooden-headed commanding officer who had sent the order from Fort George to Stornoway for these men to appear at Fort George on a certain date or they would be punished. To get to Fort George in the time stated was a physical impossibility. The poor fellows tried to get on board the ship, but were driven back by the police. That was not the way to maintain peace or encourage recruiting. They ought to encourage the Militia, and the regular soldiers too, and not treat them worse than dogs. A sixpenny telegram might have saved all these 150 Militiamen from being left the whole night long without shelter and food in a cold and bleak climate. He maintained that the officer who gave the insane order to which he referred was not fit to fill the position he occupied. No commercial man would be retained in his office five minutes if he did such tomfoolery. He hoped the officer responsible for treating these Lewis Militiamen in this fashion would be degraded, or at least lose his command.

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† See col. 1395.

MR. HALDANE said he was sure they all recognised the salutary effect of the attention which the hon. Member gave to the affairs of his constituents; and that no incompetent Minister would retain office for a week under his severe criticism. As he had already informed the hon. Member steps had been taken which would prevent any such unfortunate occurrence which had been referred to from happening in the future. The reason of the mistake was that the commanding officer had based his calculation as to the number of Militiamen who would travel from the island of Lewis on past experience, and the moment it was found that there was no accommodation for them on the boat, the expenses incurred by them were refunded. He was sure that the constituents of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty must be very much indebted to the hon. Member for the attention he gave to their interests.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he was not satisfied with the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman. What he wanted to know was what was going to be done with the wooden-headed officer responsible for the mismanagement at Stornaway. He wondered what the Minister of War would think if they were to take away his salary and make him sit out of doors all night. That sort of experience might do certain Ministers some good. Unless the War Minister was going to punish the officer responsible for the mismanagement he would not be doing his duty to those who fought our battles, and who were poorly paid and poorly looked after.

Resolution agreed to.

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £423,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances of the Imperial Yeomanry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Mr. George Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Eight o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday 25th April.

The House met at 2.45 p.m.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dover Harbour Board Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

West Middlesex Roads Bill. Order [27th February] that the West Middlesex Roads Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).

Sir Lewis McIver reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills; That Mr. Robert Duncan, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Ordered, That Mr. Robert Duncan do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills on Friday, at eleven of the clock.

Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the South Shields Gas Bill in Session 1904 be referred to the Select Committee on the Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*)

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Bargoed (two); Batley; Birley; Cannock Chace; Cefyn Brithdir; Chickenley Heath; Corton Wood; Fence Branch; Lidgett; Netherton; North Somerset; North Staveley; Ravensthorpe; Roundwood; Sharlston; Tankersley; Warren Vale; Wath Main; Wharncliffe Silkstone; and Whitwood Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; From Aberaman; Adderley; Aldeburgh; Aldershot (two); Almondbury (three); Amersham; Ashford; Ashmanhaugh; Ashwell Thorpe; Aston (two); Aston Abbotts; Awbridge; Aylesbury (two); Aylmerton; Ayres Quay; Badgworth (two); Bagby; Bamford (two); Barkston; Barnsley; Barton Bendish; Batley Carr (two); Beamish; Bear Wood; Beckingham; Bedwardine; Beguildy (two); Belchamp St. Paul; Bengeworth (two); Bethnal Green (six); Bickley; Bickley with Wedmore; Birkenhead (three); Birkenshaw; Birkenshaw cum Hunsworth; Bishop Middleham (two); Bishopwearmouth; Blackburn (two); Black Torrington (three); Blaxhall; Bledlow (two); Blofield; Bolney; Bolton; Boughrood; Bradford; Bradwell (two); Brancepeth; Brant Broughton; Brawdy with Hayscastle (two); Bray; Brewood; Brighouse; Bromley; Brownhill; Burnham Westgate and Burnham Overy; Burston; Burton (two); Burton Joyce; Bury; Canterbury (two); Capel Colman and Llanfihangel Penbedw (two); Cardigan; Carew (two); Carlton Colville; Cassop (two); Castlemartin (two); Cawthorne; Chatburn; Child's Ercall; Chillingham; Chilworth (two); Chiselborough; Chobham; Chorlton (two); Church Stretton; Cleck heaton (nine); Cleobury Mortimer; Clevedon (two); Clydey (two); Clyro; Cockley Clay; Coleford; Collingham Bridge; Colewich (two); Crakehall (two); Cranford (two); Cranworth (two); Cregrina; Cringleford; Crosland Moor (two); Crowle; Culmington (two); Darlton (two); Darton; Denby; Denton; Dersingham; Dewsbury; Dickleburgh; Dinton (two); Diss; Dodworth; Downside; Dunstan; Durham-on-Trent; Ealing (nine); East Acton; East Boldre; East Bradenham; Earl Soham; Earl Stoneham; Earls Heaton; Earsham; East Stonehouse (two); Edmondsham (two); Elland (two); Ellingham; Ellington; Elson (two); Enfield; Esh (two); Eversley; Exeter; Failsworth (two); Fareham; Farlow; Farnley Tyas; Feering; Feltwell; Fittleworth; Ford; Forncett; Foston; Freystrop; Freystrop and Haroldston; Fulwell; Gawthorpe; Gildersome; Golcar; Gomersal (two); Great Marsden; Great Missenden; Guist; Gladestry; Haddesley; Halifax; Halvergate; Hanbury (two); Harton (two); Havant (two); Headless Cross; Heaton; Hebburn (three); Hebburn-on-Tyne (three);

Hedenham; Hedworth (two); Henfield; Heswell; Heworth (two); Heywood; High Littleton; Hillingdon West; Hindringham; Hipswell (two); Hollingworth; Holmebridge; Honley (two); Horbury; Horbury Bridge; Horkstow (two); Horning; Horwich; Huddersfield (eleven); Hythe (two); Ilston; Ipswich; Islip; Jarrow Grange (two); Kea; Kelsale; Kelshall; Kenley; Kentish Town; Kessingland; Kingston Peverill with Monkton Peverill; Kingwinsford; Kirby Cane; Kirby Fleetham with Fencote; Kirby Knowle; Kirkburton; Kirk Deighton; Kirk Fenton (two); Knighton; Knutton; Lawrenny (two); Laxfield; Layburn (two); Lilley; Limehouse; Linthwaite (four); Little Missenden (two); Little Newcastle (two); Liversedge (five); Llanarthney (two); Llanddarog (two); Llanddeiniol (two); Llanegwad; Llangattock-vibon-Avel; Llangoedmore; Llangynfelyn; Llanrhystyd (two); Llansaintfraed-in-Eloel and Bettws Disserth (two); Llanstephan (two); Llantwit Fardre; Llanvair Kilgeddon; London (three); Long Bennington; Longdon; Longhurst; Lyndhurst; Madeley (two); Maldon (two); Malvern Link (two); Mamble (two); Manchester (two); Manorowen; Marloes; Marloes and St. Brides; Marsden; Martham; Meltham (two); Merthyr (two); Middlestown; Minstead; Misterton; Mold Green (two); Montacute (two); Monken Hadley; Monkokehampton; Moreton; Morley; Moylgrove; Nantmel; Newcastle (two); Newport (Pem.) (three); Newton Flotman; Norden (two); Norland; Northampton; Northgate (two); North Tuddenham; Norwich; Notting Hill; Oby; Odcombe (two); Old Trafford (two); Orleton; Ossett cum Gawthorpe; Outwell; Oving; Ovington; Padiham; Park Mill; Penbryn (two); Pennard (two); Pennington; Pirbright (two); Pitchcott; Plaistow (three); Poringland; Preston Gobbalds (two); Preston Plucknett and Brympton; Prince's Risborough (two); Purbrook (two); Puttenham (two); Rashcliffe; Raveningham; Reading; Redenhall with Harleston and Wortwell (two); Rendlesham; Rhosmarket; Rhydberth (two); Ringland; Robert Town; Robeston Wathen (two); Rochford (two); Romsey (two); Runton; Rushbury; St. Thomas on the Bourne; Salford; Sandal (three); Sandal Magna (five); Sarisbury (two); Saxlingham Thorpe; Sedgeford Seissett; Selby; Shadforth; Shelfanger; Shelley (three); Sherfield on Loddon; Shinfield; Shireoaks; Shithington; Silchester; Silkstone (three); Skenfrith (two); Slaithwaite; Slindon; Sotterley with Wittingham; South Acton; South Crosland; South Elemham; South Hetton; South Ossett; Staincliffe (two); Stamford; Standlynch with Charlton (two); Stanley; Stanmer and Falmer; Stoke Goldington; Stow Bedon; Stretford (three); Sunderland (two); Surlingham; Swainsthorpe (two); Swansea (two); Swanton Abbot; Syston; Talbenny; Tarleton (three); Teddesley Hay; The Lee; Thorndon; Thornes (two); Thornham; Thornhill (three); Thornhill Lees (two); Thurgoland (two); Thurlstone (four); Tibberton; Tilford (two); Tintinhull (two); Tintwistle; Tongham; Tritlington; Turton; Uffington (three); Upperthong; Wakefield (eight); Walton, Aylesbury (two); Walton West; Walwyn's Castle (two); Warkworth; Warmfield (four); Warnham (two); Watton-at-Stone (two); Weare; Wednesbury (two); Welby; Welland; Wensley; West Bradenham (two); Westgate Common; West Ham; Weston (two); West Winch; White Chapel; Whitgreave (two); Whitley Lower; Wickham Market (two); Windsor; Woking (two); Wooler; Woolverstone (two); Wordsley; Worplesdon (two); Worsthorne; Wraysbury; Wreningham; Wrenthorpe (two); Yateley (two); and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table.

JURORS' EXPENSES BILL.

Petition from Essex, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Gateshead, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Stranraer, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Petition from Henfield, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: from the Congregational Union of Scotland; and Stranraer; to lie upon the Table.

RAO, R. JAYARAJA.

Petition from R. Jayaraja Rao, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petitions for repeal: from Brierfield; Leicester; and Nelson; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Petitions for alteration: from Batley; Belfast; Bolton; Bradford; Brighton; Bristol; Dublin; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Hanley; Kilmarnock; Liverpool; London; Manchester; Newcastle-on-Tyne; Oxford; Paisley; Pontypridd; Preston; and Taunton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL MINES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; Mr. Verney]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3563 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPORTS TO CHINA AND SOUTH AMERICA.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th March; Viscount Turnour]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.]

SUGAR (COST) (LONDON, PARIS, AND BERLIN).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; Mr. Toulmin]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Local Loans Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1905, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 133.]

2. Irish Land Purchase Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, from 1st November, 1903, to 21st March, 1905, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 134].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Land Purchase—Burns-Hartopp Estate.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the grounds on which the Congested Districts Board refused the application of Patrick Sullivan, now residing at Cahirciveen, to be reinstated or provided with a new holding on the Burns-Hartopp Estate, near Cahirdaniel, which has lately been acquired by the Board; and can he state how it is intended to deal with the large vacant farm at West Cove on this estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board refused this application upon the grounds that the holding from which Sullivan was, as the result of a family dispute, evicted in 1902 is now in the possession of his brother's family, and that no land is available to provide him with a new holding, the estate being very congested. The farm at West Cove will be insufficient to provide for the enlargement of adjacent small holdings, of which there are a large number.

Kilgarvan Evicted Tenant.

Mr. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application for reinstatement of John Cronin, an evicted tenant, of Killafadamore, Kilgarvan, has been received by the Estates Commissioners; and whether, seeing that the farm is still derelict and that the property has not yet been sold, the application of this man will be favourably considered.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they received the application in question on the 9th instant, and will consider it in due course in pursuance of the regulations.

Irish Teachers Training Colleges.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many teachers, male and female, entered the training colleges in Ireland in 1899 and 1900; how many of these teachers, male and female, got their certificates and are getting increments; how many teachers, male and female, have not got their certificates and not any increments; and what is the cause now, after six years, and how many increments are due to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that 276 teachers entered training colleges for one year's course in 1899 and 1900. Of these, 259 passed the examination at the end of the course and were awarded the usual certificates. Of the 259, 237 have now qualified by service for the training diploma. It would take a considerable time to ascertain the number of these teachers who have actually received increments of salary, but it may be assumed that every teacher entitled to an increment under the rules has received it. The granting of increments to teachers depends on so many conditions that it would not be possible within the limits of an Answer to a Parliamentary Question to state the cause of the non-granting of increments where such have been refused. If, however, any particular case of refusal of increment should be brought under the notice of the Commissioners it will be investigated.

Irish Ordnance Survey.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst the chainmen and labourers in the field sections of the Ordnance Survery in Ireland; whether he is aware that the promises of increased pay and timely promotions contained in the Blue-book rules are seldom realised regarding civilians in the service, that young civilians who join the service stay only a short time, and that there is little prospect of promotion or increased pay or pension; and whether he will inquire into this grievance with a view to providing a remedy.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The chainmen and labourers in the field are paid at the same rates in Ireland as they are in Great Britain, and it is not known that any cause for dissatisfaction exists among them. No promises of increased pay and timely promotion are made in the Blue-book rules which are not fully satisfied. The rates of pay are regulated by the Director-General according to merit and the nature of the work done. Promotion depends upon the occurrence of vacancies. Pensions are not given generally to assistants who joined the department after 4th January, 1873, but only to the holders of certain posts which carry with them a right to pension. A considerable number of assistants leave the service of their own accord, with a view, no doubt, to improving their position.

Royal Naval College, Osborne.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the undertaking given on behalf of the Admiralty to the Treasury that the final estimate of £160,000 for the Royal Naval College at Osborne would not be exceeded has been adhered to; and whether the original estimate sanctioned by Parliament in 1903 was for £40,000, the subsequent increase being by Treasury sanction.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Answer to both parts of the Question is in the affirmative.

Income Tax Commissioners—Clerks' Remuneration.

MR. SEARS (Cheltenham): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is aware that clerks to local commissioners of taxes and assessors and collectors of taxes, not being civil servants, are paid yearly £379,100 in lieu of poundage; whether he will consider the advisability of dispensing with these services, and to assess and collect these taxes more efficiently and expeditiously by officers of Inland Revenue, and thus effect a saving of at least £100,000 a year; whether it has been found necessary to employ officers of Inland Revenue to clear up arrears; and whether he will take steps to secure that men shall not be employed as assessors and collectors who may be tradesmen, and are thus given facilities for knowing the circumstances of rivals in business in the same locality.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The sums paid in poundage are as stated. No change could be made in the existing system without a complete change in the whole scheme of Income Tax administration and corresponding changes in the Law, a matter that cannot be discussed within the limits of an Answer to a Question. Officers of the Inland Revenue Department are employed to clear up arrears only in those districts in which the collection of Income Tax is undertaken by that Department direct. No complaint has reached the Department in regard to the status of collectors or assessors which would suggest that a limitation of the kind indicated requires to be placed upon the discretion of the District Commissioners of Income Tax, or of the Board of Inland Revenue, in respect of the selection of persons to fill those posts.

Payment of Army Pensions.

MR. GODFREY BARING (Isle of Wight): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it would be possible to arrange for the payment of Army pensions to be made weekly in cases where pensioners may desire it.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The whole question of the mode of payment of Army pensions is now receiving careful consideration.

The Judge Advocate-General.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the duties and functions of the Judge Advocate-General have, since the first year of George I., been regulated by the Mutiny Act, now the Army (Annual) Act; whether The Representation of the People Act, 1867, schedules the office as one of profit under the Crown, which makes a Member of Parliament who vacates his seat by accepting it re-eligible to the House of Commons; whether the present Judge Advocate-General became a member of the late Government in August, 1905; if so, why he did not resign office with his colleagues; and, if not, by what legal authority the tenure of a statutory office was altered without the sanction of Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The duties and functions of the Judge Advocate-General are not regulated by the Army (Annual) Act. Certain sections in that Act refer to the holder for the time being of the office, but his duties and functions arise under the Letters Patent by which he derives his office from the Sovereign and by usage, which has varied from time to time. The Representation of the People Act schedules the office as one of profit under the Crown, which makes a Member of Parliament who vacates his seat by accepting it re-eligible to the House of Commons. The present Judge Advocate-General, so far as I am aware, did not become a member of the late Government in August, 1905, any more than did Sir Francis Jeune in 1893. The hon. Member is in error in thinking that the office is a statutory one.

Army Cadets' Fees.

MR. RUFUS ISAACS (Reading): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the scale of fees in force at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, is graduated in favour of cadets whose fathers are, or have been, in the service; and, if so, seeing that such a course is calculated to limit the supply of officers, whether he can see his way to make the fees uniform on the lower basis as an inducement to other classes to enter the institutions for military training.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The scale of fees is graduated according to the services rendered by the father. There is no dearth of candidates for either institution, and it is only owing to the lack of accommodation at Sandhurst that there is any shortage of officers. I fear that I cannot contemplate the increase in Army expenditure which would arise were I to adopt the proposal suggested.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Welsh Coal—Submerging Experiments.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can now give the result of the experiment of submerging Welsh coal at Portsmouth dock; and whether any change that may have occurred in the calorific value of the coal submerged or stored on land has been due to chemical or physical changes in the quantity of the coal.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The experiments are not yet completed.

Mechanician Watchkeepers in the Navy.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the anticipated cost of training 3,000 mechanician watchkeepers for the engine rooms of His Majesty's Navy, allowing for cost of converting the training ships and maintaining them, and allowing for the loss of the men's services, as stokers, during the three years they are being trained.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The number of mechanicians suggested in the Question is exaggerated. The present proposal is to enter for training one hundred candidates a year and to put them through a two years course of training. This number can be trained in the "Indus" establishment at Devonport, which has been rendered available by the concentration of boy artificers at Portsmouth and Chatham. It is not possible to answer the last part of the Question as to the cost, as the establishment is not exclusively appropriated for the training of mechanicians; both the men under training and the staff employed belong to the *personnel* of the Fleet, and are available for general service in the event of mobilisation.

Carnarvonshire Schools—Furnishing Dispute.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in reply to the contention advanced by the Carnarvonshire Education Authority in regard to the provision of furniture for voluntary schools, he has asked for an assurance that the necessary desks in the case of Llandurog National School shall be supplied at an early date, in order that the grant may be put forward in the ordinary course; whether he has declined to admit the accuracy of the statement of the authority that their requirements, in the case of the Llannor National School have not in substance been completed; what decision he has arrived at in respect to the state of structural efficiency of the provided school buildings; whether he will lay the correspondence that has passed between the Board and the local authority, in reference to these matters, upon the Table of the House; and whether, in view of the advice upon which the authority have been acting and the importance of his decisions to other authorities in Wales, he will consult the Parliamentary representatives of Carnarvonshire before taking further action.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The Board have informed the Carnarvonshire Education Committee that in their opinion it is the duty of the local authority to provide the new furniture which is required to replace that at present in use in the Llandurog National School. The Board have stated that they consider that the managers of the Llannor National School have substantially carried out the requirements, which have so far been made by the local authority. It would appear, however, that there may be additional requirements, which the local authority may desire to make; these will, of course, receive the prompt consideration of the Board, when placed before them. A considerable number of the council schools in Carnarvonshire require attention, and the Board have consented to a scheme proposed by the local authority setting out the order in which they are to be attended to. I do not think the correspondence is of such a kind as can usefully be laid upon the Table of the House, but I will gladly supply the hon. Member with any further information. I will certainly consult the hon. Members for Carnarvonshire about any cases in which their local knowledge is likely to prove of value.

Island of Lewis Squatters.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state whether titles at fair rents have been granted to squatters who have built houses on the common pasture lands in the island of Lewis.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I have made inquiries and learn that the proprietor has after much anxious consideration and with great reluctance come to the conclusion that it is not possible to give such titles.

Lochs School Board Election.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state whether Mr. Orroch, chairman of the Lochs School Board, island of Lewis, acted as returning officer at the recent school board election in the parish of Lochs; and, if not, will he state the name of the person appointed by the school board to act in that capacity, and the cause of the delay in sending out notices of the approaching election, especially having regard to the fact that the election was rendered void through such delay.

MR. SINCLAIR: The returning officer at the recent election was not the chairman of the school board, but the clerk, Mr John Macdonald. The Department has no information as to there having been any delay in sending out notices of the approaching election. An order for a new election will be issued by the Department in due course.

MR. WEIR was understood to press for further inquiry into this matter, and

MR. SINCLAIR undertook to look into any fresh facts that might be laid before him.

Peats for Scottish Schools.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, having regard to the fact that the practice of carrying peats to school was discountenanced under the Scottish Office Circular of January 30th, 1894, he will state why it is in force in the parishes of Lochs, Barvas, and Uig, and not in the parish of Stornoway, island of Lewis; and will he state in what respect Mr. Robertson, His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, controls the first three named boards.

MR. SINCLAIR: I have to refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his Question of March 8th.† The manner of supplying fuel, provided it is adequate, is a question for the discretion of the local authority, and there is no reason why the three parishes named should conform to the practice of Stornoway, or *vice versâ*. His Majesty's Inspector's position in relation to these three school boards is fully set forth in their Lordships' Minute of March 4th, 1895, which will be found printed as an appendix to the Code.

MR. WEIR: It is simply a question of economising the rates in the interests of the landlords.

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): I am sorry to inform the House that my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General is not able to be in his place to move the Second Reading of this Bill. He has been for some time suffering from a malady which has now seriously affected his voice, and although he is, I am happy to say, in process of recovery, it is still quite impossible for him to take any part in this debate. The duty, therefore, devolves upon me, and I wish I could discharge it with anything like the lucidity and power which marked my hon. and learned friend's introduction of the Bill. In one sense the task before me is fairly simple. The great majorities by which Bills on this subject passed their Second Reading in the last House of Commons, and the very striking majority by which the Second Reading of the hon. Member for Newcastle's Bill was passed a few days ago, show that there is almost universal agreement as to the existence of a grievance, and very considerable agreement as to the remedy for it. There are four branches of this subject, each of which is dealt with in a separate clause of the Bill now before the House. They are the law relating respectively to conspiracy, picketing, the law of trade interference, apart altogether from the law of conspiracy—a very important point which happens to be omitted altogether from the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle—and, fourthly, the question as to whether trade unions should be treated as corporate bodies to the extent, at least, of being liable to have actions brought against them. So far as the first three of these points are concerned, the debate on the introduction of the Bill disclosed very little difference between the two sides of the House. Indeed, it would be strange if there were any very substantial difference upon these first three points, because the Bill goes not a step further than the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission appointed by the late Government, a Commission upon which no working man sat, and which had not the advantage of hearing any working-men witnesses. We are sometimes accused in the Press and in circulars of employers' associations of desiring to confer upon trade unions some exceptional privilege or immunity not shared by the community at large. Those who put forward that charge one need only refer to the Report of the Commission appointed by the late Government. On three out of the four points dealt with in this Bill the Commission recommend alterations of the law that we now propose, certainly not on the ground that they confer any exceptional immunity on trade unions, far from it; it was in order, as they told us, to remove exceptional disabilities imposed on these trade unions, disabilities which are contrary to the general spirit of our law, and which a very little reflection will show are completely destructive of that elementary right of combination upon which the freedom and prosperity of the industrial classes of this country so largely depend. And on the fourth point, that relating to the results of the Taff Vale decision, although the Commission did not recommend the course we have adopted, yet by their recommendation on that head they recognised clearly enough that there was a grievance; that the law as it now stands operates unjustly and hardly upon trade unions in this respect. They presented a most admirable Report, from which it is clear that their recommendations are only intended to give to labour the safeguards which the law now confers upon capital and property.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 647.

What, then, is the ground of difference between the Government and the Opposition, and in some minor degree for the moment—I hope not for long—between the Government and a considerable section of its supporters? It turns upon the question as to whether or not trade unions are to be treated as corporate bodies to the extent, as I have said, of having actions brought against them. The mere form of the actions which may be brought against trade unions is not of any importance for the purpose of this discussion. We know that trade unions are not now corporate bodies, and the mode of suing them which has been devised or discovered, by which they can nevertheless be treated as though they were corporate bodies, is by means of what is called a representative action. This is a legal formality with which I do not propose to trouble the House. The substance of the thing is perfectly clear. The question is whether trade unions are to be treated in the same way as other corporate organisations are treated —namely, by being made liable to rights of action for what are alleged to be their corporate acts. The question is put clearly enough in a circular which I received yesterday morning, and which probably most hon. Members have received, from an association of employers, in which they ask this question. They begin by saying—

"It is a serious matter that trade unions should be free from the liability which attaches to all other corporate organisations."

The circular mentions municipal corporations, railway companies, large trading companies, and other similar bodies, and it goes on to say that all these bodies are liable to the full extent of their assets. It adds—

"It has never been suggested that such bodies as these should be relieved from their existing responsibility. Why, then, should it be done with regard to trade unions?"

In effect the question amounts to this—Why should not trade unions be fully and legally incorporated in law in the same way as railway companies in this country? What is incorporation? If any one wanted to sue all the persons present at a public meeting, he would have to do so by means of separate writs addressed to each individual by his own name. He could not sue a public meeting as a whole. But if the persons present in a public meeting chose to combine themselves into a company so as to become incorporated at law, then the public meeting could be sued as an independent entity, quite apart from the individuals that might compose it at any given moment. And it is asked with a great show of plausibility—Why should not trade unions be treated in the same way? The question shortly put and free of technicalities amounts to this—Why should they not be incorporated at law? That seems a very simple question, and the employers in this circular put it with great force. They believe that what they are demanding is simple equality as between trade unions and other corporate organisations; and an opinion on equality, especially when it comes from persons with a Conservative tendency, is apt to seem very plausible. When it is put forward by gentlemen on this side of the House it is, I daresay, accompanied by the taint of suspicion, but it must be innocuous when it comes from employers or the Conservative Party. Let us apply this test fairly to trade unions as compared with other corporate organisations. It will be obvious to all that, if trade unions are to be made subject to action, if they are to be put under the liabilities attaching to incorporation, they must also have the privileges of incorporation. They must be entitled to bring actions to enforce contracts upon which their very legal existence is founded, they must be entitled to bring actions to enforce contracts between a union and each of its members. I do not know whether hon. Members opposite are quite willing to embrace that doctrine in all its consequences. It would, of course, be a novel and monstrous doctrine to say that there should exist under our law an organisation which is to be liable to suits against it as if it were an incorporated body and yet not be allowed to enforce its legal contracts against its own members. What would be said if these gentlemen who sent out this circular from the employers' associations were told that there must be a sort of limited liability company devised which should be subject to all rights of action on the part of third persons or anybody else, but which should not be allowed to sue its own members for calls? It might have its own exchequer depleted by the actions which might be brought against it and yet not be entitled to turn round and sue its members on their contracts in order to replenish its depleted exchequer. Why, everybody would say that that was not only an injustice, but a monstrous absurdity. But let hon. Gentlemen who demand equality take note of the fact that the position, which I have described as hypothetical in regard to limited companies, is precisely the position that trade unions occupy under recent decisions. If you want equality there are only two ways by which it can be achieved. You must either, as some people desire, incorporate trade unions, putting them under all liabilities of action and endowing them with right of action, or you must give them neither the rights nor the liabilities of action. For my own part, I find it difficult to defend any intermediate proposition. If we, following the love of compromise so dear to us all—or which, whether we love it or not, becomes a habit by force of circumstances—seek for some middle course we shall probably find ourselves adopting a course which is not logically defensible, which will give rise to complaints either of privilege or oppression, according to the point of view.

Let us take the first of the two logical alternatives in regard to this matter which I have ventured to put before the House—that of incorporation. That must be based on equality both of liability and of privilege. What is the general form of contract between a trade union and its members? Although there is some legal doubt about the proposition—I do not pretend to be able to make a single legal proposition with regard to the law which is not assailed by some legal doubt—I think we may say that a trade union is entitled to make a contract with its members that those members shall not return to work in a strike except with the consent of the majority of the union, expressed, it may be, through their legal and executive body. At present that contract, although legal, is not enforceable by law. Under Section 4 of the Trade Union Act of 1871 that contract is expressly made non-enforceable, because it was the intention of the statesmen of those days that trade unions should not be treated as incorporate bodies. And therefore they made these contracts non-enforceable. But, following out our supposition that trade unions are to be treated with absolute equality and that they are to be incorporate bodies, that contract will become enforceable in courts of law not merely by actions for damages for its breach, but also by way of injunction in restraint of breach. A trade union would be able would be entitled, then to go, and to go with a very good case, to the Court of Chancery and ask that injunctions should issue against certain of its workmen who, in breach of that contract with the union, proposed to go back to work. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear."] I am glad to hear some hon. Members opposite say "Hear, hear" to that. I hope they will follow me with similar agreement throughout certain other results which I propose to put before the House. The trade union having got these injunctions, what follows ? Imagine the case of some great strike with, it may be, hundreds or thousands of workmen, under pressure of starvation, desiring to return to work. They have been forbidden by law. We hear a great deal about watching and besetting and picketing. That would become an obsolete controversy then, because the trade union would be entitled to go before the court and demand to receive the aid of the law, and their pickets would be the police, and, if need be, perhaps the military. I wonder what we should hear then about peaceful persuasion. The peaceful persuasion would be batons, and bayonets possibly. And yet a number of hon. Members who are denouncing our proposed clause with regard to picketing, because they think it hard on workmen who wish to break their contracts with their union, say "Hear, hear," to the proposition that trade unions should be incorporated and receive the right to have the work which they had hitherto done by pickets done by the forces of the Crown. That is not the only consequence. It is worth while pausing to imagine what the Cotton Employers' Parliamentary Association would say when their wishes had become law and trade unions had become incorporated, with the consequences I have just indicated. Should we not have fresh circulars denouncing the incorporation of trade unions ? Should we not have impassioned appeals and protests against treating these bodies—bodies, as we would be told, and rightly told, are formed for, among other purposes, industrial war—as if they were peaceful commercial associations ? There would be the greatest scorn and contempt poured on those persons who said that trade unions should be treated in precisely the same way as railway companies, municipal corporations, and limited companies.

That is not the only consequence. A striking feature of the recent decisions that have brought about this Bill is the development of the law with regard to procuring breaches of contract. Workmen have been severely punished wherever it can be proved—I was going to say alleged—that they have procured a breach of any contract between an employer and his workmen. That is an illegal act, which at once brings all combination within the meshes of the existing law of conspiracy. But when trade unions are incorporated and their contracts with their members are placed under the sanctity of the law relating to contracts, it will, of course, be a wrongful act on the part of an employer to bring about any breach of contract between the union and its members, and the employer will be the subject of injunction if, in such a case, he tries to lure the men away from the solemn and sacred contract they have made with their fellows. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear!"] Again, I am glad to find agreement. I remember one case in which I was engaged where an employer had offered the men a sum of money in order to return to work, giving them, I think, £1 apiece. Somebody was punished for libel for saying that he ought to have given 30s., thirty being the number of certain pieces of silver. However, he had given them 20s. apiece, and they returned to work. That would be, under any state of equal incorporation, an illegal act, and he would be punishable for that precisely as a union has recently been mulct in very heavy damages to the extent of something like £27,000. It would be punishable in damages because he had helped to bring about the defeat of a strike, which is a lawful object, and had helped to bring it about by seeking to procure breaches of contracts which are not only lawful but can be enforced by law. These are consequences that hon. Gentlemen opposite have got to consider if they desire to give us, or to give trade unions, equality of treatment with railway companies, municipal corporations, and limited companies. The statesmen of 1871 considered all these points. In giving the trade unions a modified legal *status*, to the modest extent of declaring that those who joined them should not be treated as criminals and that those who robbed them should not be allowed to go scot free as public benefactors, they deliberately and carefully refused to put them under either the liabilities or the privileges of incorporation. The matter was very well put by Lord Morley, who, speaking in the House of Lords on the Trade Unions Act of 1871, said—

> "The objects of trade unions were mostly such as Courts of law should neither enforce, modify, nor annul, but such as should rest on consent."

That is, I venture to say, still sound doctrine. That is the doctrine on which we are now proceeding. For thirty years it was considered to be sound law, and the thirty years experience that we had under the law as we conceived it then to be has convinced us that it is sound policy. Where in the world is there an industrial community which has less to show of industrial disorder during the last thirty years than our own country? If trade unions have been more privileged here, which I deny, than they have been in other countries, then their privileges have had a most beneficent effect. The record of England in respect of industrial disorder is marvellous. I remember when I was Recorder for Newcastle, a great industrial district, having within my jurisdiction 250,000 people, that over 20,000 men connected with the engineering trades were on strike for about six months. I need not ask the House to try to consider what that meant in prolonged suffering and struggle and hardship to the men and their families. It meant scores of thousands of human beings placed in the direst straits for the means of their subsistence. I held two sessions during that period. The first session there was no case at all connected with the strike. In the second session, at the end of the strike, I had before me one prisoner only whose offence had nothing whatever to do with the industrial conflict that had been going on. I thought it must be surely that cases concerned with the strike had been dealt with by the magistrates without reference to sessions, but I was informed that there had been only one, and that a very doubtful case, as to which one of the magistrates who adjudicated on it told me that they had serious doubts about the propriety of punishing the defendant. That was the only case in that great struggle throughout a period of six months and with nearly 100,000 people involved. As Englishmen we are entitled to be proud of that. I do not think that in France, Germany, or any other country in Europe, or in America, is such an experience as that possible. I therefore do not share the fears that are so generally expressed as to what will happen if the immunity from action which trade unions have so long enjoyed should be continued. I do not think that the policy which has produced such admirable results ought to be thrown aside simply because the Law Courts have broken down the safeguards with which Parliament vainly thought it had protected trade unions. No one has a more profound and sincere respect for the Law Courts than I have; it would ill become me, and would be impossible for any one in my position, who has derived so much benefit from the working of those organisations, to look on them with anything but affectionate respect. But they are, after all, human—I do not think there is any contempt of Court in saying that—and they naturally and properly give effect to their own sincere convictions as to the character and purposes of organisations like trade unions in a certain class of cases. I suppose hon. Members opposite will say it is not unreasonable that there should be persons who think trade unions are cruel and evil organisations; but when such persons are called upon to sit upon a jury, it would be very remarkable if that view of the character and objects of trade unionism did not affect their minds when they came to apply vague doctrines like that of legal malice, or vague theories of law like that relating to conspiracy. It is almost inevitable that it should.

I might perhaps be permitted, for its bearings on the clause relating to the Taff Vale decision, to say something about the law of conspiracy, and to illustrate why it is that those who are interested in trade unions are naturally and properly desirous that industrial conflict should not be made the subject of litigation; because, remember, that is the real meaning of the recent decision—that industrial conflict shall be made the subject-matter of litigation before tribunals on which no working man can sit, because, of course, special juries do not contain working men. I wonder whether the House thoroughly appreciates the present position of the law of conspiracy. It was thought that its effect had been remedied or removed by the Act of 1875, by which it was enacted that conspiracy in relation to trade disputes should no longer be a criminal offence. I have no doubt whatever, and it was quite clear to the contemporaneous generation, that the statesmen who framed that enactment thought that in taking away the punishment for conspiracy in these matters they were depriving such conspiracies of their character as offences. I do not suppose it ever occured to them that they were leaving offences under the law to which no punishment would attach. That was not the habit in 1871 any more than it is now. However, it has been held that that was the effect of their Act, little as they thought it. It has been decided that all that the Act of 1875 did was to take away the criminal character of the offence of conspiracy, but to leave it in all respects subject to civil actions as an offence. Therefore the law of conspiracy still prevails, though it is no longer to be enforced in criminal, but only in civil Courts. What, then, is the law of conspiracy? I will quote, first of all, what Lord Cairns said as to the object of the Legislature in trying to remove this law of conspiracy from the pathway of trade unions. He said—and I beg the House's attention to this statement of one of the greatest lawyers that ever lived, a Conservative lawyer—

> "The principle on which the Bill was based," the Bill of 1875, "was that the offences in relation to trade disputes should be thoroughly known and understood, and that persons should not be subject to the indirect and deluding action of the old law of conspiracy."

Trade unions are now subject to the indirect and deluding action of that old law. What is the law? It was very well stated by a Judge who of all others spoke with the greatest authority on the subject, Chief Justice Erle. He said that prior to the statute of George III. any such concerted proceeding on the part of workmen as a strike would have been an unlawful combination punishable at common law. That is the old law. How much of it remains? A few steps will make the matter perfectly clear to the House. There was a statute passed in the reign of George IV., in 1825, allowing a limited right of combination to persons who met at a meeting in relation to trade disputes, but the right of combination was confined to the persons present at the meeting, and was not allowed to extend beyond that; it did not entitle them peacefully to persuade any other person to leave the employer's service during a strike. That was the law after 1825. In 1851 a workman was indicted because he had been peacefully persuading some of his fellows to leave their work, and he was acquitted on the facts; but the law was laid down clearly enough, and it was shown by the ruling then laid down that that was an offence not justified by the common law, not permitted under the statute of George. Therefore an Act was passed in 1859 which permitted peaceful picketing and peaceful persuasion. Oddly enough, it is the very words of that Act which we are seeking to-day to re-enact. It may be said that that is not a very good precedent, that the words do not seem to have been very efficient. But what happened was this: the Act itself was repealed in 1871, it being then thought that the same thing was being re-enacted in another form; but unfortunately, the form of words chosen by the draftsmen of the Act of 1871 was not good enough for the Law Courts, and therefore it was decided that peaceful picketing, which had prevailed without complaint for twenty years, was not permitted under the law. In fact the law as to peaceful picketing was abrogated by the Law Courts. Did the Act of 1871 alter the substantive law of conspiracy? The best way of answering that question is to give a case which happened in 1872, the famous case of the gas-workers, which has been doubted as law by some Judges. I rather incline to the belief that the opinion of the Judges who doubted the authority of that case has itself become doubtful law owing to the more recent decisions. That was the case where the workmen had asked their employers to re-instate one of their fellows who had been dismis ed. This man had been given work which was in some way contrary to the rules of his union, and, desirous to enforce the rules of his union, he preferred not to do the work. The men were punished because they had broken their contract. Among the various counts of the indictment there was one, wholly independent of breach of contract, for what is called conspiracy to injure, and the learned Judge's ruling on that count of the indictment has had very serious results for workmen ever since. The learned Judge, Justice Brett, who would not consciously have done an unjust thing to any human being, said that there was evidence here of conspiracy to injure. In order to find such conspiracy he had to show that there was some evil intent on the part of the persons who had combined, and so he did, for he defined as evil intent the intent of workmen to force their masters to carry on their business in a way contrary to the will of their masters. The man who had been dismissed had been trying to enforce the provisions and rules of his union, and the other men said, "If you dismiss him we will go," but the fact that they said it altogether showed conspiracy, and the fact that they were making a threat to induce the master to do something he did not want to do showed evil intent, and therefore that was a punishable offence. Now, that law, which it was thought had been modified by one case, is, I am afraid it is only too clear, revived. Of course the decisions have not gone that far yet—decisions take a little time to develop just as other things do—but they are on the road. In the most recent and most important of the cases, the case which really gave rise to the present dispute, "Quinn *v.* Leathem," the principle was laid down by a most able and high-minded Judge, Lord Lindley, which practically cuts at the very root of all right of combination. Lord Lindley said—

> "A threat to call men out, given by a trade union officially to an employer of men belonging to the union and willing to work with him, is a form of coercion, intimidation, molestation, or annoyance to them and to him very difficult to resist."

I daresay it is—

> "And, to say the least, requiring justification."

What justification is possible under the existing law? It must be one that satisfies a special jury, with not a workman on it, so that every dispute between employer and workmen ending in a strike requires justification before a tribunal either of employers or of men drawn from the employing class. Can anybody say that with the law in that condition the right of combination in relation to trade disputes in England any longer in any substantial sense exists? It has gone. When these cases come to be considered as matters of principle, and when these principles thus laid down by eminent legal authorities are pushed to their inevitable and logical extreme, you have no right of combination left. I regard that as a most serious condition of things, not merely from the point of view of trade unions, but from the far wider point of view of the community. One of the most essential things to the well-being of this country is the condition of the industrial classes. Trade unions are an essential safeguard against this country's being turned into the paradise of the sweater. It is the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that a matter affecting the vital interests of the industrial classes is not an intensely national question. We cannot injure them without injuring ourselves, for we are all members one of another. The Government, therefore, are determined to end the state of things which has arisen in spite of the Act of 1871. They are determined to restore to trade unions the security that the statesmen of 1871 intended them to have. The final form of the clause in which that intention is to be carried into effect is undoubtedly best discussed on another stage of the Bill. But without anticipating any discussion on the Committee stage, I think I may fairly say that the declaration of the Prime Minister and the vote of my right hon. friend the Attorney-General on the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle leave no doubt as to the substantial aim of the Government. Even the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle leaves some serious loopholes to the ingenuity of my profession which also, I think, had better be left to the consideration of the Committee. For instance, the third clause dealing with the results of the Taff Vale decision is not quite as water-tight as it might be.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): It is not water-tight at all.

*Sir W. ROBSON: The right hon. Gentleman is right. I myself could find a way through it, and I have no doubt it would be child's play to my right hon. friend.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: I think we ought to say what we mean, one way or the other.

*SIR W. ROBSON: I am very glad to hear such a novel principle laid down by the other side. Now that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are in a position in which they are able to say what they mean, I hope they will not find their powers of expression unequal to so unusual a task. The Government have been reproached for leaving this clause to the House. That is a course which the Opposition are fond of denouncing when it is adopted, and of demanding when it is not adopted. But I venture to think that there never was a time when the reasons connected with the public good for taking such a course were stronger than they are on the present occasion. Just consider the nature of the fourth clause. It invites trade unions to modify and adapt their own constitutions in a particular way. It calls upon them to constitute a specially appointed committee which is to have complete and exclusive jurisdiction in the management of the whole of a strike. That committee is not necessarily to be the governing body of the union, nor is it necessarily to be entitled to deal with all strikes. It is to be appointed to deal with strikes in a particular area, or, perhaps, with only a single strike. But in regard to any strike put under its authority it is to have sole and complete control, a freedom which may have consequences serious to the union itself. Surely a matter of that kind, affecting the internal economy of trade unions, is one which no Government would ever seek to impose on trade unions without first considering or consulting their opinions. I think any Government would be eminently unreasonable if they laid such a clause before the House without inviting an expression of opinion from those who, from their experiences, are the best judges of the practicability and utility of such a clause. Considering the great areas over which trade unions have jurisdiction and the vast distances that separate their branches, large and small, the control by the leaders of a trade union of a strike is not quite so easy and effective as it appears to the Parliamentary draftsman to be. Therefore, the Government intended from the first to invite the opinion of the House and of those particularly concerned with trade unions upon this clause. Having invited that opinion they are bound not to ignore it. Nobody can look at this clause with a friendly eye without seeing at all events that it is an attempt, whether successful or unsuccessful, to achieve the same end as that which is sought to be achieved by the clause proposed from another point of view in the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle. The Government, as I have said, do not desire to ignore the wishes of those who are most concerned in this matter, and they will not ignore them. The question of how those wishes may be best given effect to is one for consideration in Committee, and I ask the House to proceed to that stage with the least possible delay.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said that whatever their personal opinions, he was sure all Members present had listened to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, not only with great interest, but with a considerable amount of sympathy. It was quite certain that the hon. Gentleman was very intimately concerned with the drafting, consideration, and preparation generally of the Government Bill of which he had now proposed the Second Reading, and the position in which the hon. Gentleman found himself that afternoon was one which ought to ensure the sympathy of everybody in the House. He had had to announce, in mild phrases no doubt, and in guarded language, a statement which amounted practically to this: That the opinions of His Majesty's Government on the matter were set forth in the Bill, but that they were ready to alter or vary them at the bidding of hon. Members sitting below the gangway on the Opposition side. ["No, No."] He had heard almost every speech which had been made in the House upon this extremely important question, and he thought it would be admitted that there was a tendency on all sides to argue the question from a narrow standpoint. The measure should not be taken from the standpoint of the benefit of any particular section of the community, for it involved nothing less than the immediate future of the whole industrial fabric of this country. He was very glad to hear from the

Solicitor-General the suggestion that the Bill was presented in the interests of the working classes as a whole. He was of opinion that if hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House could believe that the Bill was really conceived in the genuine and true interests of the working classes of the country they would give it their heartiest support. But the question was, was the measure going to be a benefit and genuine advantage to working men? The working class of this country could be divided into two parts. There was that proportion of working men who were members of trade unions, and that proportion who were not, but who, no doubt, in the opinion of certain hon. Members, ought to be. The Government seemed to him to suppose, and the Solicitor-General in his speech appeared to suggest, that trade unionism represented the whole working class of this country. ["No, no."] That was enormously removed from anything like the real fact. The truth was that the members of trade unions in this country represented about one-tenth of the whole working men population. He believed he was within the mark when he made that statement. [An HON. MEMBER: It is one-seventh."] He was quite ready to accept the hon. Member's correction, but he would point out that that one-seventh was diminishing and not increasing. ["No."] Surely when one was considering the interests of the working classes he ought not merely not to forget but specially to remember the interests of the six-sevenths rather than of the one-seventh. He proposed to inquire whether or not as a matter of fact there was any reasonable probability of the provisions of this Bill—if it became law—advantaging in any single particular the six-sevenths majority of the working classes of the country. The Bill was going to alter the law as it now stood. What was going to be the effect of that upon the six-sevenths to whom he referred? By Clause 1 it would legalise the kind of procedure which was the subject of notoriety and of universal execration in the case of "Quinn *v.* Leatham" not long since when two employers and two sets of workmen between whom no quarrel existed were each coerced in order to carry out what could only be characterised as the rancour of a single trade union. He did not understand how hon. Members professing to belong to the Party which had always stood for the freedom of the many against the privileges and the tyranny of the few could go to their constituents and explain that they meant absolutely and in express terms to permit and legalise monstrous procedure of that kind.

Clause 3 particularly would legalise the system of black lists by which non-unionist workmen might be coerced and deprived of employment through no fault of their own. Under this clause strikes would be possible to enforce these black lists in order to prevent non-union men from earning their living, and it would be possible to foment strikes in places where no quarrel existed in order to bring pressure to bear upon other men where quarrels did exist. Were any of these things in the interests of the working classes as a whole? He could not conceive how anyone could suggest that they were. Although there might be a certain proportion of the working classes who would benefit under the Bill, the point the House would have to consider was whether the working classes as a whole would benefit. If it was shown, as he submitted it must be, that the effect of this provision would be to advantage perhaps a small proportion of the working classes to the immediate, instant, and terrible disadvantage of the majority, he found it difficult to understand how any hon. Member of the House could continue to support it. What was going to be the effect of Clause 2, "peaceful picketing," on the working classes as a whole? Under that clause it was apparent that it would be impossible to prevent any number of persons, whether it were 5,000 or 10,000 [An HON. MEMBER: "2,000,000."]—or 2,000,000 if hon. Members below the gangway could get them together—attending in front of a man's house so long as they said they had only come to obtain information or to persuade him to work or to abstain from working. There was of course the provision that they were to attend before a man's house in a reasonable manner, but 10,000 workmen could not attend before a house in a reasonable manner. Furthermore, that provision would be no defence to the man, because it would often be impossible to show that they had done anything unreasonable. He submitted that for any number of persons to be allowed to come to a man's house to persuade him to do something peacefully was a most grotesque proposal. Hon. Members below the gangway must admit that the real object was not peaceful persuasion at all, but to bring pressure to bear upon a man who stood out against them to do something which, if he had his liberty, he would refuse to do. If that were not so, hon. Members below the gangway and the Government would be content to have the number of persons who were to attend limited to three. If the only object was peacefully to persuade or to obtain information, it must be obvious to anyone that two or three people were more likely to attain that object than an unlimited number, for which hon. Members below the gangway had always stood out.

The effect of Clause 4, which was the main clause of the Bill, would be to upset the Taff Vale decision, and the House were entitled to ask whether that would be a good or a bad thing, in fact, for the working classes of the country. That decision was given in June, 1901, and there had been five years in which to observe its effect upon the trade unions. The effect had been very great and very marked. If hon. Members examined the figures of the trade unions returns they would see that a considerable change had taken place since that decision was given. Trade unions were richer; their funds had grown, in respect to both income and invested funds, and there was at this moment more money in the hands of the unions, per member, than ever before. What happened was that immediately following on the Taff Vale decision, the object for which that money had been expended was sharply changed. About 63 per cent. of the whole expenditure of the 100 trade unions, with regard to which figures were available, was taken up by what might be called standing charges. As to the remaining 37 per cent., a remarkable change had taken place since 1901. During the six years from 1895 to 1900 the unemployed benefit paid by these trade unions amounted to 20 per cent., and no less than 17 per cent. was spent in connection with disputes of one kind and another. Since the Taff Vale decision in 1901, the amount expended on the unemployed benefit had increased to 27 per cent., and the expenditure in connection with trade disputes had fallen from 17 per cent. to under 10 per cent. The effect of the Taff Vale decision had been that a great deal less had been spent in connection with trade disputes, and a great deal more had been spent in benefits of various kinds. Strikes had not been nearly so numerous, and had been infinitely less violent, and had involved less mischief. Could it be held that any of those were bad things for the working classes as a whole? He could not see that they were. A strike was a most miserable and lamentable business. One hon. Member had told the House on a previous occasion that no trade union leader who knew his business would advise his men to go on strike if he could avoid it. The effect of the Taff Vale decision had been to put into the hands of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway a tremendous weapon to use in the way they desired, namely, to avoid strikes, because they could now say, "If you strike your funds will be made amenable." The effect of the Taff Vale decision was extremely instructive as showing that, although the unions had grown richer, and although disputes had become less frequent, and the members of the trade unions got more of their contributions back in real benefits of various kinds, nevertheless, since that decision, there had been an extraordinary and continuons decline in the number of men who belonged to trade unions. It seemed to him to show clearly, what many of them had always supposed, that unless a trade union could manage to keep going a certain number of trade disputes, the mere fact that they could offer benefits, the mere fact of all their other activities, would fail to keep together the numbers of their members. It was not, therefore, because they desired really to benefit the working classes as a whole that they were pressing for this clause. It was because they desired more power to conduct those very disputes which they agreed were very mischievous, but without which their organisations could not live. Of course, as the Solicitor-General said, compromise was a useful thing, but he himself failed to see how there could possibly be any compromise between those who looked to the interests of the working classes as a whole, and those who looked with a single eye to the interests of what was really a most insignificant proportion of them. If the House desired to legislate in the interests of one-seventh of the working classes alone, then no doubt the Bill would commend itself to them. But anybody who desired only the benefit of the working classes as a whole would find it very difficult, he thought, to agree with this measure, which would fasten upon six-sevenths of the working men of this country a kind of tyranny which it was difficult to characterise in moderate language, and which could not but result in very serious injury indeed to the industrial system of the country as a whole. Hon. Members who, like himself, could not bring themselves to agree with this kind of legislation, took up that position because they saw in it class legislation of the most wanton description, because they believed it was a measure of the most unblushing privilege and monopoly, and because they saw in it nothing whatever which was likely in the end, or which could possibly in the end, increase that prosperity and that general content, peace, and well-being, which in the case of the working-classes was only another term for the content and prosperity of the whole of the inhabitants of these islands.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) desired to say, in the first place, that he joined with the hon. and learned Gentleman in expressing sincere regret at the absence of the Attorney-General and the reason for it. Before proceeding to deal with some of the clauses of the Bill he would like to say a word with reference to the speech of the hon. Member for Norwood. He did not know where the hon. Gentleman got his figures from.

*MR. BOWLES said the figures were those of the Board of Trade Report of this year on Trade Unions.

MR. SHACKLETON did not think the Board of Trade had ever asserted yet that the trade unionists were only one-seventh of the workpeople of this country.

*MR. BOWLES said the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had said so.

MR. SHACKLETON said he was not responsible for what the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil said on that particular Question, but he did not think his hon. friend meant anything like that. Of course they had to consider the millions of people not old enough to be trade unionists amongst the working-classes. They could almost put the figure at five for every one, and if there were 2,000,000 organised adult members of trade unions in the country, it worked out at a much higher proportion than one-seventh of the working population. When the hon. Gentleman said that the Government were acceding to the wishes of a microscopic portion of the country, he was rather overstating his case. That microscopic portion at any rate had had the effect, if nothing else, of returning the Labour Members, who made this a test question at the last election, and the action of His Majesty's late Government in this matter had something to do with the minority in which they presented themselves in the House. He would give the hon. Gentleman credit for not knowing exactly what the proportion of trade unionists was, but he would ask the hon. Gentleman if he spoke for non-unionists in this country. His hon. friend the Member for Bolton was one who helped to get five per cent. advance to the operative spinners of Lancashire without a strike. Would the non-unionists refuse that? The Government were dealing with the Workmen's Compensation Act that had been brought about by the action of the trade unionists for years. Had the non-unionists refused to accept any of the benefits which that Act of Parliament conferred upon them? It was too late in the day for any hon. Member to champion in this House the cause of the non-unionists, who were willing to receive anything trade unionists obtained for them, but would not bear their fair share of the cost. The hon. Gentleman had tried to prove that as a result of the Taff Vale decision trade unions had spent less money in strikes. He admitted that during the last five years trade unionists had accepted conditions of labour which they would not have accepted had it not been for this judge-made law. Trade unionists thought they had a right to ask for fair play and that they should be allowed to assert their rights without being hampered by decisions of this kind. He would like to the fullest extent to appreciate the remarks of the Solicitor-General with reference to the difference that existed in this country, and had existed for years back, as to law and order during trade strikes as compared with other countries. The trade union leaders, knowing what strikes meant to the workmen, would go a long way round before they entered into them. No strike pay could fill up the necessary meal tub and pay the rent and find the necessaries of life. By their past record they had proved that they had not led the people astray or encouraged unlawfulness or disorder, and therefore they should be trusted with the powers for which they asked. All they asked for was that they should obtain that standing in law which they obtained thirty years ago, and which they considered they were entitled to have returned to them.

He would say a word or two with regard to the Bill. As to the first clause, the wording was somewhat similar to that in the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Newcastle, though changed in its terms, and they were anxious to know, because they believed the intention of the Government was the same as theirs, whether the last few words of the clause would carry out that intention. He referred to the words, "would be actionable as a tort." They were simply laymen looking at things in an ordinary way. This, he understood, was a lawyer's phrase, meaning that it would only be actionable in a civil sense and that they would not be liable to a criminal action in any sense.

SIR W. ROBSON was understood to assent.

MR. SHACKLETON said with that explanation he thought they might be able to agree when they came to the Committee stage. But with regard to the second clause he could not go so far as to say he agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman. The words "to attend peaceably, and in a reasonable manner" were contested last year, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer then made a statement which ought to be remembered now, namely, that these words would give rise to such an amount of litigation as would astound those who did not take a lawyer's view of things. The words the right hon. Gentleman used were—

> "In my opinion the effect of the introduction of these words merely introduces all the dangers of conflicting judicial interpretations which we are seeking to rid the law of."

He hoped His Majesty's Government would re-consider whether it was absolutely necessary to introduce these words in this clause. He wanted the House to remember that they were still within the common law. They were not asking for any privilege in regard to the common law, and if anything was done which was an offence against the common law then they would continue to be responsible. To introduce those words would give the judges a rather extraordinary power. Was there any reason why the words should be put in as affecting trade unionists only? Why should the House be asked to put in something different to apply to trade unionists than applied to ordinary people? The Labour Party felt that the words were entirely unnecessary and would lead to a large amount of litigation.

With regard to numbers, if the Solicitor-General only knew the difficulty of conducting strikes he would never have argued in the way he he had done. Trade unionists had more sense than to send twenty men to visit one, and they had something else to do with their men and their money. One or two men were generally sent to see the person who was working, and they waited for that person. If they provided that the number was to be limited to six, what was to prevent the employer arranging for another four or five and making it seven? He could prove by sworn affidavits that men had been engaged to go into trade disputes for the purpose of creating a breach of the law. If five men were sent to make the number more than six, in order to make them liable, the law would be nonsense. The 10,000 men argument which had been used was equally absurd. No trade unionist organisation had ever sent out bands of men in order to annoy peaceful citizens. They were anxious to be fair and reasonable, and their past conduct had proved that they had been both fair and reasonable, and he trusted their future conduct would justify the claims they were now making.

With regard to the third clause, which was an entirely new one, he wished to say on behalf of the Labour Party that he appreciated it very highly and believed it was a very good one. Its effect would be to make the law apply to trade unionists as it had applied in the past to the employers in the Mogul case. Was that a privilege? It was nothing of the kind, for it was simply putting trade unionists upon an equality with employers. He wished to say a few words with regard to the circular which had been alluded to, because he happened to know very well the gentlemen who had issued it, and they were a body of men he greatly admired. He had met them upon many occasions to settle trade disputes during the past thirty years, and they had settled many of them amicably. Although he admired them as a class he was afraid they had allowed the gentleman whose name appeared at the bottom of the list to lead them too much. He was inclined to think that a solicitor had drawn up this circular for them, and he did not think the individual employers concerned would be ready to swear by every line of it. Some one had had a job to do and had done it. The Solicitor-General had dealt with the circular very admirably and effectively. He noticed that one paragraph expressed great alarm at the huge fighting funds which would be at the disposal of trade unionists, and stated that the consequences would be very grave. One would think upon reading that circular that none of those things were being done to-day. It was remarkable how innocent those employers must think other people were. There was not a single dispute took place in any large centre but those very things were resorted to. There was not a single trade unionist official in the House who could not relate any number of cases where men had been refused work because they had been out on strike. The arrangements between employers were not by letter, but by telephone, and a system was adopted by which no operative could ever find out exactly how it was done. They were only able to discover it in cases, perhaps where some under-manager had given the show away. He happened to know of a case of that kind which occurred on March 30th this year during a strike in Ayrshire. One of the men on strike went after work and got it, and the following Monday morning the under-manager told him that he dared not employ him as he would be under a penalty of £20 if he did so. His object was to give the House an instance of the kind of conspiracy that went on during the strike. That was a case for which they had chapter and verse, but the same thing occurred in every trade dispute, and every effort was made to prevent the men on strike finding work, in order to compel them to go back on the terms offered. To say that this Bill would confer such powers as those which the employers would have to use in self-defence was all nonsense, because the same thing was being done to-day. All they wanted was, that if they adopted like tactics to those which were adopted by the employers, they should be just as free from financial responsibility as the employers were to-day. They had argued this case time after time, and it was the old position. The effect of what was proposed was to limit the result of a dispute which might mean a loss of 5 or 10 per cent. to the operatives. It might be argued that they ought to stop the strike and save the union funds, but how would they be able to prove damages if the strike had been caused through the illegal action of the employer? It might be easy for the employer to prove damage, but it was scarcely possible for the employee to do so. The employer might urge that he had lost orders and that the strike had prevented him getting business, and he might total up his damages to a fabulous sum for which the funds of the union were to be held liable. The position they were taking up was that of absolute immunity from financial responsibility in those cases. Let the employer recognise when he entered a fight of this kind that he stood to lose something just the same as the workmen. They did not want to enter into such fights, but if they were compelled to do so they wished to fight upon an equality, and then if either side did anything which was criminal they should be made responsible; but to argue that the funds of the union were to be drained in order to cripple the employees in the struggle was a great injustice. It was easy for an employer to draw a cheque for £500 any time to carry on the fight, but the trade unions had to collect their funds by twopences and threepences for years. He asked the Government to consider whether the wisest course would not be, when this Bill got into Committee, to accept practically what the Labour Members had suggested. He agreed that certain Amendments were needed, but he wished the Government to go at this question direct, for they did not want any roundabout process with regard to getting this immunity. Let them have the direct thing. They believed that their case was just, and they would vote for the Second Reading relying upon the promise of the Prime Minister and the Solicitor-General that the Government would give an ear to their plea He hoped that the way they would meet this difficulty would be on the lines of the Bill which received so much support only a few Fridays ago upon its Second Reading.

*MR. CLAVELL SALTER (Hampshire, Basingstoke) said that hon. Members who had spoken appeared to assume that there were only two classes in the community, namely, trade unionists and employers of trade unionists. He wished to urge that there were in this nation large masses of people who were neither trade unionists nor employers of trade unionists, and it was in their interests that he was disposed to look at the matter. In opposing the Bill, he contended that he did not do so from any sympathy with or desire to assist employers, but because he was convinced that if the Bill ever became law it would affect disastrously the daily life and labour of many of the people of this country who were remote and removed from industrial disputes, and were neither trade unionists nor employers. He opposed the Bill because it was designed to facilitate strikes, first by making lawful a great number of things which were, as the law stood, unlawful, and which, in his humble judgment, should remain unlawful; and next by providing that if, notwithstanding the revolutionary changes in the law which the first and third sections would bring about, a trade union should succeed in wronging a man and robbing him of his legal rights, the trade union should be immune, and not subject to the law which applied to every other wrongdoer. He opposed the Bill because it legalised boycotting, intimidation, and the wholesale procuring of breaches of contract. All these things were now unlawful, and he thought it would be a calamity, not only to employers, for whom, he protested, he cared nothing, but to the great mass of the honest, decent people of this country if these things were to become sanctioned and permissible. He wished to say a few words on the practical matter of boycotting. They all desired to keep away from technicalities and subtleties in dealing with a matter which was apt to be somewhat concerned with technicalities. He would not take up time by attempting to deal separately with the first section of the Government Bill, which provided that in future what might rightly be done by an individual might rightly be done in concert and combination by a number of men. He differed from that proposition. He agreed with the great authorities who had pointed out that a thing might well be tolerable, at least, when done by one person, and an intolerable hardship and outrage when indefinitely repeated and done by a great number of people. The hon. Member for the Clitheroe Division had referred to the third section of the Government Bill. He always spoke of any matter of law with real doubt, but he thought the hon. Member was wrong in saying that Section 3 introduced the principle of the Mogul case on the side of the workmen. He understood that the law in the Mogul case had nothing to do with boycotting. He understood that boycotting had always been illegal under the existing law, whether by one man or a ring or combination of men. The Mogul case belonged to a class with which he was not in love, but it had nothing to do with boycotting. It was a case of trade rings and combinations for trade purposes. As he understood, the distinction in the existing law was this. It was lawful for men to combine, provided the object was to increase their own profits, and provided the object was not to injure any person, although injury might be inflicted on another person. He had often thought it was not much of a distinction which sanctioned a combination the main object of which was greed, and disallowed a combination the main object of which was hatred and a desire to injure. He did not think any lawyer or any hon. Member in the House would deny that if the third section of the Bill became law boycotting would be lawful in this country the moment it was associated with a trade dispute. No one could doubt that Sections 1, 2, and 3 read together legalised boycotting. The Bill legalised in express terms that which he considered to be an outrage and an interference with any man's right, be he great employer or little workman, for whom he should personally have more sympathy in this connection. It took, continually and wholesale, from the workman who wanted to be left alone one of the most sacred and inalienable rights which everyone had secured to him by law, and that was the right to an honest quiet life, and of earning his own living and employing his own labour when and where he pleased without let or hindrance. In objecting to this Bill because it legalised boycotting he was tempted to refer to the case of "Quinn *v.* Leathem," which was typical of the class which the first and third clauses struck at. That case was typical of the mischief which the law might now stop and which, if this Bill became law, it would be unable to stop. In that case the facts showed that a small butcher named Leathem employed a few non-unionist hands. He had a weekly contract with another butcher named Munce, who employed unionist workmen. Everything appeared to have gone well until a trade union of butchers' assistants was formed in the place. The trade union made a rule that not only should unionists not work where non-unionist men were employed, but that they would not cut up any meat from any shop where non-unionists were employed. They called for Leathem to discharge his foreman. Leathem did not adopt any outrageous attitude towards the trade union; he went on his knees, so to speak, and begged them to let his men enter the union, offering to pay any fines due for for that purpose. The answer of the union was that they would not admit these men, but that they must be punished by being compelled to walk the streets for a year. Punished he did not know for what, unless it was for not being members of the union. Leathem had the decency to refuse to discharge the foreman in these circumstances. Therefore the union had recourse to Munce, and threatened him with a sympathetic strike in his shop unless he co-operated with them. They compelled him to discontinue his contract which had been going on for twenty years. That was the kind of proceeding which would become lawful if the two sections to which he had referred were passed. He called attention to the extreme width and generality of the language employed in the first three sections of the Bill. The Bill was not confined to things which men's unions might do, and it was not confined to things which masters' unions might do. It gave a general licence to every subject to persecute other subjects the moment there was a trade dispute. One need not be a trade unionist or an employer, or anything else; so long as one could show that there was a trade dispute which he was furthering, or that he was contemplating the possibility of a trade dispute, all the salutary restrictions against persecution and intimidation at once disappeared. The words in the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875, limiting trade disputes to disputes between masters and employees, had been intentionally omitted, and a wrong might be inflicted by any combination of men upon any individual provided only they could show that there was a trade dispute or that they contemplated a trade dispute. He could not think of any trade difficulty which could not be justly described as a trade dispute. A similar observation applied to picketing and to a matter to which he would like to call attention. It appeared to him to be perfectly clear that the effect of the second section of the Bill as drawn was to make it lawful in future to incite to a breach of contract. The words were that—

> "it should be lawful for one or more persons, acting on their own behalf or on behalf of a trade union in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, to attend peaceably and in a reasonable manner, at or near a house or place where a person resides or works or carries on business or happens to be, if they so attend merely for the purpose of obtaining or communicating information, or of persuading any person to work or abstain from working."

Well, if a man went to a place where people were employed under contract and invited them to abstain from working, he could not understand how that man could do that unless he incited the worker to break his contract. Hon. Members knew that the Royal Commission inserted most pointedly in their recommendations that it should be expressly provided that there should be no soliciting or inciting to breach of contract; but those words were omitted in the Bill. He contended that there should not be words in the Bill which incited men to break their contracts.

SIR W. ROBSON was understood to dissent from the hon. Member's reading of the clause.

*MR. CLAVELL SALTER said he was very glad to understand that his reading of the clause was, in that respect, wrong; and he hoped that when the proper time came express words would be inserted by which it would be made abundantly clear that it was wrong to incite a man to break his contract. He wished to call attention to the extremely dangerous and, he thought, disastrous character of the working of the first three sections of the Bill, not in relation to disputes between employers and workmen, but in relation to the interests of the great body of the people who were neither the one nor the other. The moment there was a trade dispute the friends and associates of the workmen were to be allowed to terrorise, boycott, and annoy to their heart's content any one, whether connected with a trade union or not. As to the fourth clause of the Bill, he greatly preferred the clause on the same point in the Labour Party's Bill. Both had precisely the same practical result of making the members of trade unions a class who were licensed to do wrong with impunity. The Labour Party's Bill, however, said in plain terms what it meant; whereas, this Bill tried to avoid saying so in plain terms, and instead of saying that trade unions would not be responsible for the acts of their agents, it set up a wretched piece of machinery under which it became transparently impossible to prove agency on the part of the trade unions. By Section 4 of the Government Bill, in the event of a trade dispute every trade union was invited to appoint a small standing committee to take charge of the dispute. He should think the smaller that committee was, the better. It would be a committee composed of men who would never be personally engaged in the work of picketing. There would be no danger of these gentlemen being engaged in any unlawful acts. That committee was to enter in a book a resolution in general terms which would prohibit classes of acts being committed. But any lawyer could in a few minutes draw up a general resolution which would prohibit in classes any sort of unlawful act which might be committed in connection with a strike. And when that solemn formula had been gone through the trade union was protected. But even if that was not enough, and if an agent of the union did succeed in committing some wrongful act — what then? The matter was reported to the committee, and the committee passed a resolution repudiating the act. The difference between this section and that in the Labour Party's Bill was that under the latter an immunity was given to the trade unions, and a man had only to prove that he was a trade unionist; whereas, under the Bill now before the House, the man had not only to prove he was a member of a trade union, but that it had also recited the incantation which was necessary to render him immune from the consequences of the law. He insisted that it was beyond argument that the effect of both these sections was this: It must be assumed that there was agency; that there was a wrongful act; and that damage was done. Yet, in future, a trade union would not be liable to make redress. It was said that the injured person could have his remedy against the agent; but the principle of the English law was that the injured party had his right of remedy against not only the agent, but against the principal. Under this Bill when a trade union agent injured a man he could sue the agent, but not the principal. The Attorney-General in moving the First Reading of the Bill made an appeal to the House not to do anything by which a privileged class might be created in this country. And the hon. and learned Gentleman instanced the case of the benefit of clergy. For his part, he was inclined to think that in the remote days when benefit of the clergy had its origin there was something to be said for it. But in the end it became a gross abuse, and the Attorney-General had, therefore, given the worst instance of class favouritism, injustice, and privilege. But what the House was asked to do by this Bill was a much worse thing; because a man, whether cleric or lay, who claimed the benefit of clergy, was not immune from the operation of the law of the land in a particular Court to which he might be taken. That privilege was in no sense such a privilege as was proposed under this Bill to be given to trade unionists. He could not help thinking that, if this Bill became law by the agency of the Liberal party, they would have cause to repent in the future. There was no principle to which both sides had of late years more strenuously appealed than the principle of the equality of all men towards the law. If, in these circumstances, the Liberal Party were going to set up a privileged class in order that they might obtain the support of powerful parties which they would have otherwise had to go without, then he ventured to say they would lose in the country at large far more than they would gain. He was not sure that trade unionists themselves would rejoice in the end if this Bill became law. Nothing was more striking than the improvement manifested in the last few years in the feeling of the ordinary, average, non-political man, and in the masses of the people, towards organized labour. He thought himself that that remarkable change was largely due to those very decisions which were now made matter of complaint. He maintained that the attitude of the non-political, indifferent, moderate men who, at one time, were inclined to look with jealousy at the rapid rise of trade unions, was, now that they saw the same law was to be rigorously applied to them as to other people, to look with a better feeling on trade unions. He thought that the trade unionists might make a very bad exchange if, in order to get power and to put a more effectual screw on the employers here and there, they sacrificed the growing good opinion of moderate men throughout the country. He was satisfied that as soon as the ordinary man saw that trade unions were being made a class which were to have specially favourable legislation enacted for their benefit, the good feeling to which he had referred would give place to distrust and apprehension. He could only express the hope, the almost despairing hope, that the Liberal Party, vested as it was just now with such unexampled power and responsibilities, would not signalise the very outset of its legislative career by setting up a class apart, select, and privileged to do with impunity what others were punished for doing—a class privileged to ruin others without redress—a class apart, and shamelessly and absolutely immune from the ordinary laws which bound their fellow countrymen.

*MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District) said he should like to say, in the first place, that many Members sitting below the gangway had listened to the speech of the Solicitor-General with great pleasure and with a feeling of considerable relief. In the second place, he should like to repudiate the kind of argument which had been used by the hon. Member for Basingstoke. It was that kind of atmosphere of suspicion with regard to trade unions which had done so much in the Law Courts of recent years to bring about the position they were now hoping would be put an end to. With his cleverness as a lawyer, to which he should like to bear testimony, the hon. Member had travelled a little outside the domain of his knowledge when he expressed the thought that the trade unions would carefully conspire and combine to place upon their minute books bogus resolutions for the purpose of misleading the Courts. Probably the hon. Member was not aware of this fact, which he stated without hesitation, as one who had been engaged professionally in most of these trade union cases, that in the Taff Vale and many other cases the employers would not have been able to get judgment against the unions if it had not been for the letters, minutes, and documents that the unions themselves disclosed. How could it therefore be suggested that the unions were going, for the sake of escaping a legal liability in any action which might lie against them, if the clause referred to passed dishonestly to put upon the books a bogus resolution? To assert such a thing was entirely to misapprehend and misunderstand that great healthy-mindedness, that great moral atmosphere among which the working classes of this country "live, move, and have their being." It was this kind of prejudice, this kind of half-knowledge, which had done so much mischief. During the past forty years it had been given to a Tory Government to appoint Labour Commissions on no less than four occasions. On three of those occasions the unions and workers had declined to give evidence on the ground that the Commissions were packed. On two occasions these Labour Commissions were appointed to curse the unions, and they remained to bless them, as was shown by the evidence they took and the reports they issued. A feeling of prejudice had been sought to be created by a series of grossly mendacious articles attacking the unions, which appeared in a London newspaper three or four years ago. In those articles, the same kind of thing was stated to which the hon. Member had now alluded. It was said that unions existed for the purpose of limiting output, and that unions were great tyrannical organisations. That was typical of the kind of pabulum which was set forth in the paper for the purpose of misleading public opinion in this country. He would cite one instance. It was solemnly stated in the paper to which he alluded that the Bricklayers' Society had a rule limiting the number of bricks that their members might lay per day, and the writer of that article solemnly produced what he alleged to be the very rule limiting output. Would it however be believed that this alleged rule was one which was trotted out by the secretary of the Master Builders' Federation before the Labour Commission of 1867, and was then proved to be the rule of a local bricklayers' association in Bradford in 1843? That was the kind of thing they had had to put up with. Then they had had the authority of a late lamented statesman that these unions were cruel organisations. Unfortunately, the tradition of that unfortunate phrase seemed to survive on the Opposition Benches. He had had fifteen years experience of these unions and an intimate experience during many years, and he said that they were as free from tyranny as any other organisation in the country. He held that they were infinitely more free from tyranny than political associations which had practised tyranny in some of the constituencies of the country at the last election. The trade unions were infinitely more free from tyranny than the Primrose League had shown itself to be in some rural constituencies that had recently and unexpectedly returned Liberal Members. It was perfectly true that there had been incidents in the lives of trade unions that they all regretted, but it was a very striking fact that should weigh with the House, that since the Trade Union Act of 1871 was passed into law, and since trade unions had had some semblance of legal recognition, by what they thought was their Magna Charta, there had not been any single instance of a recrudescence of those incidents which shamed and disgraced the unions in Sheffield in 1865, when they were simply secret organisations. He would warn the House of the danger of treating trade unions as Ishmaels before the law, and of the danger of treating organisations of this kind differently from others. It had been said by every speaker who had spoken from the Opposition Benches that, in asking for this legislation, the unions were asking to be placed in a position of a privileged class. Not only was that not so, but it was precisely the opposite of what was true. What the trade unions were asking for was that they should be taken out of the anomalous, exceptional, and unique position in which they now stood before the law, and that they should be treated before the law precisely as other bodies of an analagous character were treated. The unions were not asking to be treated in an exceptional way in regard to the law of conspiracy, but they were asking to be treated in the same way as other members of the community were treated, instead of having a special law as to conspiracy framed against them, as was the position at this moment. The hon. Member for Basingstoke had alluded to the Mogul case, and had taken it for granted that that case was rightly decided, because he had said there was no boycotting, whereas there was in the case of "Quinn *v.* Leathem." For himself, however, he could not differentiate the Mogul case from that of "Quinn *v.* Leathem," because in the Mogul case a great body of shipowners combined to compel shippers to accept their terms. The very essence of the whole case was boycotting. What the unions were asking was that the law as laid down for other members of the community should be the law to be applied to the trade unions in the conduct of trade disputes. In regard to picketing hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to think it was a terrible thing that a deputation of two or three workmen should wait on a man either at his work or at his residence for the purpose of asking him to join them in a strike movement, or for the purpose of asking him not to go in and blackleg the workmen who were out on strike. He saw nothing more terrible in that than in a deputation of two or three Church visitors coming round to him and representing to him the grievous effect which the Government Education Bill would have if it passed into law. He could not see any great difference between three or four men standing outside a works where a strike was going on and the subsidised touts of the Tariff Reform League attending at the Trade Union Congress and endeavouring to get the delegates there to join what they were pleased to call their organised labour branch of the Tariff Reform League. There was another side to this question. It was not sufficiently borne in mind that the tactics in industrial war, in the conduct of strikes, differed very little on the employers' side from those which prevailed on the side of the workmen, except that in the one case there were certain channels open to the employers which were not open to the workpeople. He had known cases in his own experience of strikes in Newcastle where advertisements had appeared in the London papers asking for workpeople to go down there at good wages owing to the great pressure of work, and of agents in London writing and asking whether there was a strike on, and of their being told there was not. He had known of a similar case in Liverpool where 700 men were engaged in the London docks on a lying statement that there was no strike at Liverpool. Those men were taken down to Liverpool, marched down to the docks through two lines of police, and put upon a tug and taken to a vessel in the middle of the Mersey without being allowed to speak to anybody on the land side. It was a monstrous thing that employers should be allowed to obtain labour by lying statements of that kind and that the right should be denied to the workmen of going about and speaking to these people. It was said that the workpeople were asking for special and exceptional treatment. In the first place they were not asking for the labour organisations anything different from that which should be given to the employers' associations. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were apparently not aware of the elementary fact that while there were 1,300 workmen's trade unions in this country there were between 900 and 1,000 employers' associations, and that this Bill, if it became law, would apply as much to the associations of the employers as to 1,300 trade unions of the workmen. The trade unions therefore were not asking to be placed in a position of privilege, of exclusion, and of advantage as distinct from the unions of the employers. In the second place, the trade unions were prepared to stand by what they asked. They only asked that the Bill of the Government should merely declare the common law. What was the common law at the present moment for organisations in positions analagous to that of trade unions? It was that they were immune from the law. The only bodies sueable at common law were corporations and individuals. It had been expressly laid down that a trade union was not a corporation, and it certainly was not an individual. A trade union was a collection of individuals. These trade unions were not asking for any different position from that enjoyed by the great social or athletic clubs or political associations. All they asked was to be treated in the same way. It had been held that a political association could not be guilty of corrupt practices in connection with parliamentary elections, and a club could not be sued as a club in tort. The people liable to be sued were the individuals responsible for causing the tort. The trade unions were asking that individuals should be amenable to the law for any individual wrong they caused, but that the funds of the society should not be touched any more than that the funds of a social club should be touched, any more than that the funds of the Conservative association should be touched for any libellous pamphlet it might issue, any more than that the Tariff Reform League funds should be touched for anything that it might do. The trade unions only asked that they should be left in the position in which the common law left them. It was perfectly true that Parliament could make other bodies than corporations and individuals sueable at law. It was said that by the Act of 1871 it made trade unions sueable at law, and the House of Lords had held that that was so in the Taff Vale case. There were many considerations upon which this House might arrive at a judgment, which were entirely shut out from the consideration of a court of law. The House of Lords when they came to the decision at which they arrived on the Taff Vale case were only able to look at the naked words of the Act of 1871. They were not free to go into the surrounding circumstances, and the considerations which led to this House passing that Act. There were certain considerations which it was important should be brought before the House, as showing conclusively that Parliament by the Act of 1871 did not intend that the trade unions should be sueable. It should be borne in mind that Clause 6 of the Act of 1871 up to a point closely followed the words of

Clause 6 of the Joint Stock Company's Act of 1862. In that Act it was provided that—

> "Any seven or more persons associated for any lawful purpose may, by subscribing their names to a memorandum of association, and otherwise complying with the requisitions of this Act in respect of registration, form an incorporated company, with or without limited liability."

Those words up to a point were closely followed in the Trades Union Act of 1871, which provided by Section 6 that—

> "Any seven or more members of a trade union may by subscribing their names to the rules of the union, and otherwise complying with the provisions of this Act with respect to registry,"

register such trade union under this Act. That was to say, the words with regard to registration in the Act of 1871 stopped short when it came to the question of incorporation. A section of the Act of 1871 clearly provided that a trade union could not be registered under the Joint Stock Company's Act, and could not be registered under the Industrial Provident Society Act. Why? Because registration under those Acts would convert it into a sueable entity as a corporate body.. But there was evidence of a still more definite kind than that. When Mr. Bruce, the late Lord Aberdare, was Home Secretary and introduced the Bill of 1871, he quoted from the minority report of the Trade Union Commission of 1867. He quoted the following:—

> "Trade unions are essentially clubs, and not trading companies, and we think that the degree of regulation possible in the case of the latter is not possible in the case of the former. All questions of crime apart from the objects at which they aim, the rights which they claim, and the liabilities which they incur, are for the most part, it seems to us, such as Courts of Law should neither enforce, nor modify, nor annul; they should rest entirely on consent."

And then said—

> "It is in accordance with that opinion that the measure of the Government has been framed."

In 1875 there was an agitation over an amendment of the Trade Union Act of 1871, and this he thought was particularly important. At the Trades Union Congress of 1875 a Scotch delegate proposed that the unions should have the right to sue and be sued. That proposal was opposed by Mr. George Howell and others, and was defeated by an overwhelming majority. They had it on the authority of Mr. George Howell, who was the greatest authority on the modern history of trade unionism, that this very proposal was discussed with the then Home Secretary of a Conservative Government, Viscount Cross, and it was decided that in the amending Bill, which afterwards became the amending Act of 1876, this provision for making trade unions suable and giving them power to sue should not be introduced. He suggested to hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side that if it were good enough for the great Conservative Administration from 1874 to 1880 that trade unions should not be given the power to sue or to be made sueable, it ought to be good enough for the present Conservative Party, which was by no means so great or representative in this House. Trade unionists were asking that there should be that immunity from action for their collective funds which they enjoyed in effect from 1871 to 1901. With regard to the suggestion that there was a process known to the law by which they could have been attacked, namely, representative action, he ventured to say that representative action would never have done what had been done by the Taff Vale decision, for it could only have affected the individual member's property, and their property in a union could not be ascertained and determined, because it depended upon mere contingencies which might never arise, and because others than members—widows and orphans—had interests in the union funds. With regard to the clause under discussion, he understood from the remarks of the Solicitor-General that there would be an opportunity of amending it. As it stood he did not think it touched the law as at present defined. Nor did he think the clause in the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle in the least degree touched the Taff Vale decision or any of the subsequent decisions. The clause of the hon. Member for Newcastle provided that no action should be maintainable against a union by reason of the wrongful act of a member. No decision had yet made a union liable for a wrongful act of a member as such. What the decisions had done was to make unions liable for the wrongful act of an officer or committee-man; and to say that they should not in future be liable for the wrongful act of a member would no more exempt them from liability than to say that a railway company should not be liable for the wrongful act of its shareholders would exempt them from liability if a stationmaster who committed a wrongful act, merely because at the same time he might be a shareholder. Obviously these two clauses could be dealt with in Committee, and he would conclude by expressing a profound hope that a satisfactory Act might be got through. He asked hon. Members on the Opposition side to remember that these unions were not only doing a great and useful work for their membership, but also on behalf of the community. The trade unions, and often they alone, by means of their out-of-work pay, had stood between hundreds of thousands of artisans in this country and the demoralising effect of pauperism. They had done something to raise and maintain the physique of the industrial people of the country by the fight which they had waged against insanitary conditions in so many factories. Trade unions, above all, had done more than any other single agency in this country to make for industrial peace, and he hoped that such an Act would be passed as would relieve them from the harassing distraction of continuous litigation, so that they might devote their energies to the great work of industrial peace.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said that although personally he preferred the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle, he should be prepared to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, believing as he did that trade unions, whether for good or ill, had come into this country to stay, that the welfare of the working classes was bound up with their success and development, and that it was the duty of Parliament to help the unions in every way so as to make them as effective and successful as possible for the welfare of the country. He was very much struck when listening to the Solicitor-General to hear what appeared to him from a legal point of view to be an entirely erroneous argument with regard to the subject of incorporation. The Solicitor-General, if he understood him rightly, had pointed out that the alternative to passing the 4th Clause of this Bill would be to incorporate a trade union, the consequence of which would be that if an individual member of the union made a contract with the union not to return to work during a strike the contract would be capable of legal enforcement, and that a union could even get an injunction against an employer if he took the man back. As one who had been associated for a quarter of a century with the practice of the law, the dictum laid down by the Solicitor-General was most surprising and astonishing to him, because he had always been brought up to believe that all contracts which prevented persons from working and earning money were absolutely void as being contrary to public policy. That was clearly laid down in all the text-books dealing with the subject. A contract, therefore, which any member of a trade union might make with his union that he would not during a strike resume work would be absolutely void.

SIR W. ROBSON said that the doctrine of the restraint of trade as applicable to these contracts was abrogated by the Trade Unions Act.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he had anticipated that answer, but he thought if the hon. and learned Gentleman examined the Act to which he referred he would find that it bore no such interpretation. He could give references to seven or eight decisions proving the contrary of the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement. For instance, a contract not to employ any man who had left the service of another had been declared to be absolutely void.

Section 4 of the Act to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred, and upon which he understood him to rely, provided that nothing in the Act of 34 and 35 Victoria should make those contracts enforceable. The reasons why Clause 4 was put in was the fear lest the other sections of the Acts should make those contracts enforceable, which had been declared to be void in common law. This proposal went to the whole root of the contracts to which the hon. and learned Gentlemen referred. He was not in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill for any such erroneous and ill-founded reasons as the hon. and learned Gentleman had put before the House. The four matters of principle referred to were the right things. If trade unionists demanded the right to peaceful picketing they ought to have it, but he would caution them that if taking advantage of a clause in this Bill they proceeded by surrounding works with 100 or 150 men, and telling every man who wished to work there that he would have his head broken—[Cries of "Oh! oh!"]—if the men were going to have various inducements made to them in a peaceful way as was the case at the present time in the United States, the result would be that they would have the masters combining and maintaining an army of men, and when 100 men proceeded to picket they would probably find 200 or 300 hired ruffians to take care that those 100 men behaved themselves. He could see very serious consequences to public order likely to arise from the Bill. If those who represented labour in this House asked for this clause, personally he should be prepared to vote for it. With regard to funds, he agreed that if the whole of the unions' funds were to be liable for the act of any official, the funds would become divided, partly into benevolent funds, and partly into strike funds. He could see great evils arising to the community from that division, and the effect would be that the union would be able to get a certain fund together which would be available for strike purposes only, and it seemed to him that there must inevitably come a time when a union having got together £30,000 or £40,000 which it could not use for benevolent purposes, would use it for strike purposes in order to get another sixpence or a shilling or one and sixpence a week in wages for its members. The result would be that there would probably be a strike which would not have occurred if the funds had not been divided. There were several important reasons why it was desirable that they should do nothing to make the unions divide their funds, and why they should help them to keep those funds together, without making them liable for the acts of individuals. As a reasonable man, he was at a loss to understand why the funds of a union should under any circumstances be made liable for the acts of an official. It would be absurd, for instance, to suggest that any of the funds of hon. Members of this House should be liable for anything which the Serjeant-at-Arms might do. Where there were corporate funds belonging to a limited liability company it was quite right that those funds should be liable for the actions of the officials. But he could not see why the funds of a trade union should be liable for the act of some official who might make a mistake. He believed that the interests of labour in this country were inseparably bound up in the ultimate development and success of trade unions and they must look to the unions to improve their methods. For those reasons he intended to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I waited to see if the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean or any hon. Member desired to follow my hon. and learned friend; and now perhaps the House will allow me to say what I have to say upon a Bill which I consider scarcely second in importance to any the Government have adumbrated or are likely to bring forward in the course of their tenure of office. One of the difficulties in which the House is placed is that we are asked to vote upon the Second Reading of a Bill, though it is not quite clear what the Bill is, or which of two alternative Bills it is to which we are asked to give approval. For my own part, I shall act in strict accordance with the rules of the House, and assume that the Bill upon which we have to express an opinion is the Bill before us—the Government Bill as read a first time, printed, and circulated. So far as that Bill is concerned, I say at once that I do not propose myself to oppose the Second Reading. I have always been of opinion that the question of trade disputes is a question we must take into consideration, that the difficulties and anomalies that have arisen in the course of the last thirty years could not be left untouched. It was because I held this view, and it was shared by my late colleagues, that the late Government appointed a Commission to investigate this difficult and complicated question, complicated in its historical and legal aspects; and I think myself that the course we then pursued not only showed our own desire to deal with the subject, but has directly contributed to providing material which should guide the House in the course that should be followed. Here I may express my regret at hearing a phrase fall from the hon. Member for Clitheroe—I think it was the hon. Member for

Clitheroe — who said he refused to recognise the Commission over which Lord Dunedin presided, the Report of which Commission is in the hands of Members. I am not quite sure that I understand what "refuse to recognise" means. It may mean that the findings of the Commission are not binding upon any section of the House, and if that is the meaning of the hon. Member I entirely agree with him, and his *dictum* would apply not only to Lord Dunedin's Commission, but to every Commission that ever sat. Royal Commissions have done notable work, but they would lose all utility if their decisions, however carefully and impartially arrived at, were to be considered to be binding upon a Party or upon the House as a whole. From every other point of view I think the labours of Lord Dunedin's Commission invaluable. It is true that the unions refused to assist the Commissioners' deliberation.

MR. SHACKLETON: It has been explained on three or four occasions that that was because the appointment of a Labour representative to the Commission was refused.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot quite admit the historical accuracy of that statement. What happened was this. It was resolved with general assent that there should be a Commission of inquiry into these matters. The question then arose whether the Commission should be framed on the principle of the representation of every section and every nationality, which is a very good way of appointing some Commisssions but does not conduce to rapidity of decision, or whether a smaller Commission, which might be described as more judicial in its character, would not be the best machinery for arriving at a satisfactory solution. My colleagues and I had reason to suppose that the latter course was one which would be satisfactory to both the then Opposition and the then majority of the House. It turned out to be a mistake. I only received information showing that I was mistaken after the Commission had been practically appointed, and after the decision was taken that it should be a small Commission and not a large and representative Commission. I have always regretted that there should have been a difference of opinion between us; but I never will admit that the fact that the Commission was not constituted exactly as the hon. Gentleman and his friends desired deprives the work of that Commission of the great value which I am convinced it will always have for those who wish to make themselves acquainted with the complicated legal aspect of this question.

MR. SHACKLETON said there were two reasons why trade unionists refused to give evidence. First, they nominated thirty men representing various trades in the country, and not one was put on the Commission. Secondly, a gentleman representing the employers was put on; and they thought that if the employers were entitled to one representative on this small Commission the trade unions were also entitled to one.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It may have been an error on the part of those who were responsible; I am afraid that means myself. It may have been an error on my part that there was not an actual member of a trade union on that Commission. There was, however on that Commission a gentleman, not himself a member of a trade union, whose knowledge of and sympathy with trade unions are notorious and have been proved by the most elaborate work in favour of trade unions, and who, if sympathy with the trade unions and knowledge of the history of trade unions be qualifications for representing trade unions on that Commission, has those qualifications in the very highest degree—I mean Mr. Sidney Webb. I do not wish to go into past history; I only wish to say that any man who really wishes to find a guide through the almost inextricable legal labyrinth which this House and the Law Courts between them have made of the whole history of this matter cannot find a better guide than the Report of Lord Dunedin and his most able colleagues. Another gentleman who served on the Commission was quoted by the Prime Minister, on the day the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle was discussed, as perhaps the highest living authority upon this subject. A Majority Report signed by the highest living authority on trade union matters, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, signed also by Mr. Sidney Webb, signed by a great Liberal lawyer, and by a great Conservative lawyer, is, I venture to say, a document worthy of the closest attention of any man who wishes to make himself acquainted with the subject. I know I do not differ from the Front Bench opposite, but I do differ from hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, and it was to them I was addressing myself. I said that the House was in some doubt as to what really was the measure before the House. I listened with attention to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General, and I listened with very great admiration, for he had a rather difficult task to perform. The unfortunate and most regrettable illness of the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill has prevented his giving us his assistance to-day, and the not less regrettable illness of the Prime Minister has prevented his giving us his assistance to-day. The result has been that the only two members of the Government who represent apparently the different sides of the controversy in the Cabinet were both precluded from assisting us in this afternoon's debate. Neither the Attorney-General, who spoke in favour of the Government measure, nor the Prime Minister, who apparently spoke in favour of a measure wholly inconsistent with it, could speak this afternoon, and the unfortunate Solicitor-General was left with the rather ungrateful task of making a speech which would throw over neither his learned colleague nor his right hon. chief. Before he began I tried to imagine how he would acquit himself of this delicate mission, and I am glad to think I foresaw the general line he would pursue. He gave us a very learned and interesting disquisition upon the law of conspiracy, he gave us a great eulogy of the work of trade unions, and almost casually in some interstice in an obscure paragraph of the speech, if any paragraph in such a speech could be regarded as obscure, he intimated in language which even now remains a little obscure—[cries of "Oh!"]—well, I will put a question directly to clear up the obscurity—he intimated in language which has still a tinge of obscurity over it that the Government were going to recede from their own Bill if sufficient pressure was put upon them by hon. Members below the gangway. Have I rightly interpreted the phrase to which I refer? I think I have, partly because I receive no contradiction either from the hon. and learned Gentleman or from anybody else in the House, and partly because I can hardly put any other interpretation upon the phrase in which he said that after all it was members of trade unions who knew most about trade unions, and it was therefore the members of trade unions in this House who ought to guide the House as to the policy they should pursue in trade union legislation. I understand that the Government Bill, which we are going to read the second time this afternoon, is abandoned in its most important provision. This seemed to the hon. and learned Gentleman to be the most ordinary and natural proceeding in the world. So far as I know it is unexampled in Parliamentary procedure. I know, of course, of many cases in which a Bill having been carried to a Second Reading has then been profoundly modified in Committee in the face of overwhelming argument, and in consequence of the impossibility of the Government's carrying their measure in its original shape. You will find in Parliamentary history many cases of that kind, but I never knew a Government run away before a shot was fired. [Cries of "Free trade."]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): Your Redistribution Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot conceive that there can be any dispute about the facts. I never heard of a Government which introduced a Bill and before the Second Reading intimated, and on the Second Reading announced, that they meant to modify it profoundly in its most important provision. If I am right, then I was justified in saying it is an unexampled procedure, and I think it is also a very inexpedient procedure. The hon. and learned Gentleman seems to think that this is not a subject in which the House ought to expect guidance from the Government; they ought to look for guidance elsewhere. The members of the late Government were abused for not giving to the then Opposition sufficient guidance on a particular doctrine which has been referred to in an interruption. I am not going to quarrel as to whether we gave guidance or not, but I will remind the House that the subject was not one before Parliament at all, it was not one on which the Government had introduced a Bill, and it was not one on which the Government were going to introduce a Bill. What is the present case? The Government come forward with a Bill. They profess, therefore, to have a plan which they recommend to the House. The mere suggestion that this does not meet with the full approval of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway induces them to modify their whole attitude; and before they have an opportunity of hearing the arguments or of seeing what trend of opinion in this House those arguments may produce, they announce their readiness to sacrifice their own Bill and accept the Bill of somebody else. That is not really the most serious part of it. The most serious part of it is that this question, by their own admission, is one of the very first importance. There are questions not involving principles on which any Government would be justified in saying, "Let the House decide this matter if it so pleases, we will not use the ordinary Party organisation, we will, in the technical phrase, allow the House to run loose in this matter." Is this question on which the Government have suddenly altered their strategy one of these unimportant questions? I have only to remind the House of the statement of the representative of the Government when he introduced the Bill that the plan which the Government are now going to adopt is class legislation. I have yet to learn that anything in the nature of class legislation, anything which goes to the root of equality and cuts down equality as between class and class, is a matter of unimportance in regard to which the Government has a right to say, "It is no concern of ours, we leave it to others to determine; we will follow their lead whithersoever it shall take us." They renounce the responsibility of giving to the House that guidance on matters of such importance which every Government of which I have ever heard has, at all events, tried to give in the direction it thought right. And it is not, after all, simply on the chance phrase of the learned Attorney-General that they based this view. I have been given, since I came into the House, an extract from a speech made by the Secretary of State for War in the very heat of the general election. The Secretary of State for War observed that—

> "he saw that Mr. Keir Hardie had written to the newspapers threatening Mr. Asquith and himself with all sorts of retribution if they would not 'toe the mark' by voting up to the particular propositions which Mr. Keir Hardie wished carried out about the Trade Disputes Bill. Well, he was sure neither he nor Mr. Asquith would budge one inch because of Mr. Keir Hardie's demands. Mr. Keir Hardie might address himself with success to the electors when he had studied the Trade Disputes Bill a little more and when he knew one-tenth as much about it as Mr. Asquith and he were bound to know in order to deal with the subject. To make the kind of preposterous propositions which he put forward was only really to show how very feeble was the position which he held in the House of Commons so far as his doctrines and his following were concerned. He had not the slightest objection to Mr. Keir Hardie putting forward his own propaganda, but if Mr. Keir Hardie thought he was going to coerce him or anybody else he had better come to East Lothian and try it."

There were cheers after that statement. And the report ends—

> "No questions were asked, and Mr. Haldane received a vote of confidence."

The right hon. Gentleman was a member of the Government at the time, he is a member of the Government now, and he is, as I understand it, toeing Mr. Keir Hardie's line as much as that hon. Gentleman in his moments of wildest ambition could possibly desire. I mention this because it, surely, proves that in the case of, at all events, some members of the Government—not merely the Attorney-General, but, as I understand, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for War—this was a question of immense and vital importance on which they were prepared to quarrel at the general election with the Member for Merthyr Tydvil, and, I presume, with the hon. Member for Clitheroe and his friends, who in this respect hold precisely the views which the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil has so often expressed in this House. I say that when a question is by the action of the Government themselves of so great an importance as I have shown this to be, their procedure does a little lack that courage and dignity which I should have supposed they would have displayed in a position which is not unexampled in our Parliamentary history.

We have heard a great deal to-day from Members on both sides of the House in favour of trade unions, and, indeed, I think this debate has too much oscillated between the common-places with which I think, we all agree, as to the great work which trade unions have done for the classes which they specially represent, and minute legal points. I shall avoid minute legal points; but, as regards the position of trade unions generally, in my opinion there is no Party, I should hardly think there is an individual now who has been brought face to face with the actual facts of our present social life who does not recognise to the full all that trade unions have done, the gap which they filled in the social organisation, and the impossibility of carrying on organised labour except by an institution framed upon their model. I go further, and I associate myself entirely with what fell from the Solicitor-General. I say that undoubtedly trade disputes in this country have been carried on with a wisdom and a moderation on both sides which cannot be paralleled in any other industrial community. Of course I do not attribute the whole of the credit for that to the trade unions. I think the organisations of the masters are entitled to their share of the credit, and I am quite sure that the hon. Gentlemen below the gangway would be ready to give them their fair share of the credit. But while that must be admitted, surely it must also be admitted that these admirable results are in no small degree due to the statesmanship, the moderation, and the wisdom which have, on the whole, guided the leaders of the trade unions in dealing with the difficult problems which must from time to time arise in an industrial society like ours. But, if every one is ready to admit that, what is its precise bearing upon the problem, I will not say which the Bill we are now reading raises, but the Bill which we shall be asked to discuss in Committee raises? The hon. Member for Clitheroe, in his very interesting speech this afternoon, pointed to the past history of trade unions, and said, "With this record behind us, why cannot you trust us with these further privileges that we ask?" [LABOUR cries of "No."]

MR SHACKLETON: With the same.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I see. "Why must you needs alter what for many years was believed to be the law? We have done nothing to show that the law, as it was supposed to be, is abused by us. You have experience behind you; cannot you now perpetuate the system which has accidentally, as it were, been experimentally tested, and which has stood the test to the credit of the trade unions and everybody else concerned?" I think that is by far the most powerful argument which can be adduced in favour of a scheme which, I am convinced, but for that argument, would never receive the general assent of this House. But I am not convinced by that argument, and for the following reasons. I think we are obliged, now that the question has been raised, to consider not merely the history of this question, not merely the series of legal accidents which led to the misconception, if that is an accurate statement of the case, that trade unions could not be sued in damages, but also to consider what is to be the legislation for all time, or at all events for a very long time, under which these great organisations are to exist. The Solicitor-General started a new argument—at least, I think it is new—upon this branch of the subject. He said, "A trade union is not a corporation. It has not the advantage of a corporation. Why then do you insist that it should suffer the disadvantages of a corporation? If you gave it the advantages of a corporation, it could insist on all sorts of contracts with its members, it could make the police picket, it could make the police prevent trade unionists returning to work, contracts between a trade union and its members would be enforceable by law, and where would the employers be then?"

I am not at all moved by that argument. I do not know whether the learned Gentleman's law is quite correct. My legal friends near me throw doubt upon it. But I am wholly unmoved by that argument, because my view is that what we have got to do is to put trade unions on an equality, and nothing more than equality, with other similar institutions in the country. Equality, and only equality—no privilege, no disability, but equality; and, in my opinion, if you carry the Bill as the Government propose their Bill should be amended, if you carry the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle—that is what it comes to—you are putting the trade unions in a position of privilege. [Cries of "No" from the LABOUR Benches.] It has been denied by, I think, the hon. Member for Denbigh, who said that only an individual or a corporation could be sued in damages. The hon. Gentleman is not, I think, right.

AN HON. MEMBER: At common law.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Trade unions and all similar bodies, though they do not rise to the level of corporations, can be sued now for damages at common law; and what we have got to ask is why, when every other body, even though it be not a corporation, can be sued in damages——

MR. WALLACE (Perth) asked the right hon. Gentleman what other similar body could be sued for damages at common law.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Gentleman deny the proposition?

MR. WALLACE: Certainly.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to fall into the clutches of the lawyers again. I am quite clearly advised that it is not necessary that a body should be an incorporated body in order to be sued in damages. Trade unions are not incorporated, but they ought, as it seems to me, unless strong reasons can be shown to the contrary, to suffer the law which other bodies not incorporated suffer, and, if they do a wrong, they should be civilly liable for the consequences of that wrong.

*MR. C. EDWARDS: I expressly said that a trade union was made suable under the Taff Vale decision by the interpretation put by the Court upon the Trade Union Act of 1871. There is no body, which is not either an individual or a corporation, which is suable at common law.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am advised that that is not a full statement of the case, and that, as a matter of fact, any body, though not an incorporated body, which does an injury may be sued and damages recovered from them. Then, if that be so, is it enough to say that trade unions are an invaluable element in our social system? ["Yes."] I grant it. But how does that answer the argument that they ought not to be exceptionally privileged? Is it said that trade unions, by the wisdom with which they have conducted their side of our trade disputes, have made those trade disputes a model for the rest of the world, and that, therefore, you ought to put them in a position of privilege? I see no reason either in the premises, with which I agree, or in the conclusion, from which I dissent, for such a course. I do not believe you can safely or rightly say to any society of men:—"You have the power to do wrong, you have the organisation to enable you to be mischievous, if you are ill-advised enough to be mischievous. You are armed with funds which may make you a most formidable power for evil if in some moment of madness you should elect to take an evil course; but, nevertheless, you have shown yourselves so virtuous up to the present time that Parliament is going to put you in a position in which Parliament has put no other similar association." We are going to say, "Do what wrong you please, no penalty shall you suffer; your funds shall be immune; you will not be required to recompense any man to whom you have done wrong, or to redress any injury that you may have inflicted." I am ready to grant that such wrongs have not occurred in the past, and are improbable in the future. I am ready to grant that the history of trade unionism is an honourable history. I am ready to admit that, if we argue simply upon the experience of this country between 1870 and 1905, we need look forward with no deep anxiety to the conduct of trade unions in the immediate future so long as the traditions which have been developed are carried out by the Gentlemen whom I see below the gangway—so long as they are the overmastering factors in trade unions, so long as wisdom, moderation, humanity, and the love of freedom preside at their councils, then, indeed, we have no reason to fear, and we need not fence round the community against any possibility of injury from these powerful organisations. But we have got to think of something beyond the immediate experience that we have had. We cannot look forward confidently for an indefinite period to similar wisdom guiding the councils of these trade unions. And by what canon of policy, by what principle that has ever regulated the conduct of this House, are we now to say that, while every other corporation and every other organised body of men are to be answerable for the wrong they do, one *quasi*-corporation—not the least powerful, but a great organisation of our social system—and one only, is to be put in a position to which no other body would dare to aspire, and is to be told that it may with absolute impunity, so far as its funds are concerned, inflict what wrong and what injury it likes upon whatsoever individuals it pleases, and shall be put above the reach of the law which touches every other association and corporation in the land? I agree with those members of the Government who have said so clearly and distinctly that they do not believe that this is a sound policy for this House to adopt. I agree with the learned Attorney-General that it is class legislation; I agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for War that it is not in that direction the House of Commons should attempt to solve this most difficult question. But I do not agree with the Government; for they have surrendered to the Gentlemen below the gangway. I appeal to the Gentlemen below the gangway themselves, for on them has been thrown upon this occasion the responsibility of giving guidance to this House in not the least difficult position in which the House has found itself. I would ask them whether it is for their interests and for the interests of the class which they so powerfully represent, whether it is for the interest of the community of which they are distinguished citizens, that the principles of equality, the principles of equal treatment under similar circumstances, should not be applied in matters in which they are interested just as much as to questions with which other classes and other individuals are more nearly connected? They are perfectly capable of seeing that you ought to deal in these matters on general principles applicable to the whole community, and not applicable only to a particular class. No men can see an argument more clearly than they; and I am convinced that if they dissent from the general proposition which I have laid down, it is for reasons which I am unable to fathom, and on grounds which have not been laid before me. They do not think with me that their Bill gives unequal privileges. They do not agree with that. They think it only gives them a position which will enable them on equal terms, and with no special immunities, to deal with the class of problems which will come before them. I think they ought to devote themselves to proving that. It is clearly not the opinion of so high an authority as the Attorney-General; it is clearly not the opinion of two or three of the most important Cabinet Ministers in this House; and, so far as I am capable of forming an opinion, it is not my own opinion. If they can show in Committee that their Bill is an equal Bill, I shall have no objection. I am not frightened by the saying that, if you add to the power of these bodies, you will make these gentlemen too powerful. But what I am afraid of is that, partly from great sympathy with the interests committed to their charge and partly because of their great electoral strength, we should abandon the only safe guide which should govern our legislation—the guide that we ought not to treat unequally persons whose circumstances are really and fundamentally identical. Let it not be said that in obedience to pressure, from whatever quarter, we have now deliberately laid it down for the first time [MINISTERIAL cries of "First time?"]—well, for the first time within recent date—but I am obliged by the interruption and I will amend the sentence, and say it would not be safe that we should think it consistent with the principles of legislation which are in harmony with modern thought, with modern ideas of freedom, with modern ideas of individual liberty, and with modern ideas of social security—it would, in fact, be inconsistent with those principles to say that there is any class or association throughout the kingdom which is by statute empowered to do wrong and to have no remedy exacted from them.

*MR. RUFUS ISAACS (Reading) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman, and also the House, upon his return restored to health. In listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman he had been struck by the great importance which the right hon. Gentleman attached to what he called the change of front of the Government upon what was Clause 3 in the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle, and Clause 4 in the Government Bill. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to twit the Government with not knowing their own minds upon this question. He thought as the right hon. Gentleman was speaking that he was going to accuse them of having unsettled convictions. There was no one in that House who had a right to speak with greater authority upon that subject. It almost seemed as if they were in the last Parliament, when it was said more than once that it did not matter what the methods were by which they chose to arrive at a policy so long as they were agreed upon the general lines of the policy; that the methods might be different indicated no real difference of opinion at all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. and learned Gentleman is quoting me I cannot honestly say that I recognise the quotation. I should not have complained if the arguments of the Government diverged from one another if their conclusions were the same, but their conclusions are vitally different.

*MR. RUFUS ISAACS said that the words he had quoted were the words of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham at a very critical period in the discussion on free trade, in which that right hon. Gentleman was explaining that the present Leader of the Opposition and himself were really pursuing the same policy by different methods, and that they had the same object. He did not say that the right hon. Gentleman agreed it was the same policy, but he must say that it had taken a very long time for the right hon. Gentleman to dissent from the quotation. There were many Members who were very desirous of hearing from the right hon. Gentleman opposite——[OPPOSITION cries of "Question."]

*MR. SPEAKER: What has this to do with the Trade Disputes Bill?

*MR. RUFUS ISAACS said he was not sure whether he was in order in explaining in reference to the Trade Disputes Bill the point of the observation which he wished to make. He thought he should be in order; if not he should deal with it in another way. He did not mean to be disrespectful to the Chair; the only way in which he was seeking to make the observation relevant was in dealing with the remarks which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to-day that there was a divergence of opinion among the different members of the Government upon this subject. The policy was the same though the methods might be different. What had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite must go very far to remove many of the scruples of hon. Members and of many people outside the House, as to the policy of giving complete immunity to trade union funds of which so much had been said. Until he heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman he had always thought that the reason of the strong objection to Clause 3 of the hon. Member for Newcastle's Bill was that it was said that advantage would be taken of this immunity by the executive of trade unions to commit unlawful acts under the protection of the immunity which would be given to their funds. That was the powerful argument that was used inside and outside this House, and he was glad to have received from the right hon. Gentleman the eloquent and high testimonial which enabled them once and for all time to banish altogether from their minds, and the minds of those outside the House who were interested in this question, the fear or danger of the leaders of the trade unions, of the executive officials of the trade unions, taking advantage of this immunity to commit unlawful acts. ["Oh! oh!"] Some hon. Members opposite appeared to differ from him, but he was only quoting their own leader. He did not pretend to say that he had used the exact words of the right hon. Gentleman, but he believed he had given the substance of them. He would repeat what he had said, and if the right hon. Gentleman dissented from him he would no doubt contradict him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I contradict you now.

*MR. RUFUS ISAACS said that the right hon. Gentleman had paid a very eloquent tribute to the trade union leaders and the trade union officials, and had said, as he (Mr. Isaacs) understood him, that he had no fear that there would be any illegal acts committed by them under the immunity given by this clause if passed. It was not because he feared that that he objected to the clause. It was the danger of what might happen in the future when they might not have such able men, men who were such a credit to trade unions and to labour at the head of affairs. He was glad he had not misrepresented the right hon. Gentleman. That being so, he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he expected the trade union leaders of the future to pursue a retrograde path; that they would become, as time progressed, not a greater but a lesser credit to the community? The right hon. Gentleman had rightly told the House that from the time the trade unions had been recognised by law, certainly during the last thirty years, there had been many testimonials to the leaders of the trade unions. Many statements had been made both by employers and hon. Members of the opposite Party showing how reasonably and moderately they had conducted the affairs of the trade unions. Again he almost found himself quoting the words of the right hon. Gentleman when he wanted a strong argument in favour of trade unions. He had been connected with trade union litigation during the last few years and he was glad to be able to say, and knew that he would not be misunderstood when he did say, that there was nothing more satisfactory in the history of trade unionism and trade disputes between the unions and employers than that, in the majority of cases, the employers and the union leaders were able to settle disputes easily and amicably, which otherwise might have resulted in serious strikes. He had in mind the words of one great Judge dealing with this very question, when he said it would be a sad thing indeed for this country if the time ever arrived when it was found that trade union representatives were no longer able to meet employers, to negotiate with them, to conciliate them, and to assist them to conciliate the workpeople, so that strikes with all their concurrent evils might be averted. Hon. Members opposite seemed to think the effect of this Bill upon the trade unions would be to multiply strikes; he would ask those who believed that to take the rules of the trade unions in their hands. He could refer them to the rules of two or three trade unions if they wished. Hon. Members would find that those rules were framed and designed with the object not of making strikes, but of redressing grievances from which the workers suffered, by means not of strikes but of conciliation, by means of concessions and by all such acts on the part of the trade union officials that could be devised to prevent the occurrence of a strike. Those rules were most carefully hedged round with provisions to prevent strikes. He would now call attention to one or two observations made by the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the law. Even on the law he could found much of his argument on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. What was the difference between trade unions and other associations and corporations in this country? Under the Trade Union Act of 1871—when the trade unions were for the first time recognised as lawful associations; when they were no longer to be deemed illegal associations because they were in restraint of trade—under that Act they were not created corporations, they did not acquire the rights usually given to corporations. The Legislature carefully provided that they should not have those rights. Why did the Legislature do that if it meant to treat trade unions as corporations? Hon. Members opposite had asked why the Government desired to make this exception? Might he not go a little farther back and ask why trade unions were put into a different category from other associations in 1871. "But," said the right hon. Gentleman opposite, "we have progressed since then," but the right hon. Gentleman held power for many years and had a great majority behind him, and why did he not with that majority at his back introduce some measure to alter the law if he disapproved of it? So far from its being a case of putting trade unions into a specially favourable position, as was described to-day, it was the other way about. When the Trades Disputes Bill with the same third clause as in the Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle was before the House in 1904 and 1905, with the Party led by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in a great majority, the Second Reading was carried by majorities of 39 and 122 respectively.

On those occasions the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman voted in favour of the Bill with that very clause. He did not say, and never had said, that either the right hon. Gentleman himself or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover had voted for the Bill. What he had said was that a number of those who were led by the right hon. Gentleman voted in favour of the Second Reading of a Bill which contained that very clause. If that clause was so injurious as the right hon. Gentleman now thought, why was it that so many Members of the Conservative Party voted in favour of it? He did not desire at this stage, as the Second Reading was not to be opposed, to take up the time of the House in discussing the law on the subject. It was so thorny that he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was very difficult to tread one's way through the labyrinth. For that very reason it was essential that trade unionists should know, and employers should know, what was lawful and what was not lawful, and that there should not be the necessity for costly litigation involving appeals to the highest tribunals in order to determine whether an act came within the law or was outside the law, and therefore made the trade unions liable. Certainly he was within the mark when he said that the vast majority of lawyers dealing with cases to which trade union law was applicable did think, until the Taff Vale decision was given, that trade unions could not be sued nor their funds made responsible. Not only did lawyers who were not on the Bench think so, but the Court of Appeal were unanimously of the same view, and if the decision of the House of Lords were referred to, it would be seen that some of the judgments were based not upon the view that trade unions were corporations, but that for convenience the procedure might be adopted of suing the trade union as being nothing more than a collective name for all the members, in order to avoid making all the members of the union defendants in the action. That made an enormous change, because the effect was that from that time it had been said that trade union funds could be attached whenever a trade union was successfully sued for damages. He was not prepared to say that though a judgment might be given against a trade union they could always attach the funds, but he admitted that would be very difficult when a decision had been given to prevent the seizure of the funds. The judgment having been given, he asserted it produced a change which ought not to rest upon the shoulders of the Judges. If this was the law to be applied to trade unions in the future, Parliament should make it after the country had had an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon a change which affected the whole constitution of a trade union, operating as it did upon funds contributed by the working classes week by week and month by month. They knew what the opinion of the people of the country was upon this question, and he thought they were entitled to say that they knew what the opinion of the House would be upon it. He submitted to the House with all possible respect to the Judges—who, he would not say, had altered the law, but who had pronounced opinions contrary to the views of the vast majority of lawyers practising in the courts—that the change which had been effected was of so far-reaching and sweeping a character that even if the Judges had the power to make it, it ought to be reviewed by this House; and if the House did not agree with it, it must exercise its privilege and power of rising above the Judges of the land, and declare the law henceforth to be applicable to trade unions in such language as would prevent misapprehension and make manifest the legal position which the representatives of the people had determined should be occupied by trade unions. Once that was done there would be no danger of the law being interpreted otherwise than in accordance with the views of Parliament, and the law affecting trade unions would be administered pursuant to the wishes and intentions of those who had the right to make it.

*SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) pointed out that although trade unions were not corporate bodies they were different from ordinary private societies. They were statutory bodies which were to some extent corporate, and Lord Halsbury, in giving his judgment as Lord Chancellor in the Taff Vale case, said that—

> "If the Legislature has created a thing which can own property, which can employ servants, and which can inflict injury, it must be taken, I think, to have impliedly given a power to make it suable in a Court of law for injury purposely done by its authority and procurement."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaking on the Trade Disputes Bill in the House of Commons in 1903 said—

> "I do not think it would be expedient, from the point of view of combinations either of employers or of the workmen, that those who are in favour of their effective existence should attempt to ask Parliament to lay down a policy of this kind, that trade organisations possessing large funds, and directed by a controlling authority, should not be responsible for the unlawful acts, if they be unlawful, shown to be committed by their agents, if they be really their agents, within the scope of their authority. I do not think it would be in the interests of the trade unions or the employers' combinations that that principle should be affirmed."

He had the very greatest respect for trade unions and for the officials who guided their proceedings, and he quite agreed with everything that had been said as to the large amount of valuable work which they had done in times past, but he could not see that that constituted any reason why they should be put upon an exceptional footing, and why they should have an immunity which was not enjoyed by other classes of the community. As he understood the law at present, they were only liable for the unlawful acts of their officials, which they had expressly or impliedly authorised, and he thought it would be in their interest that, as the Leader of the Opposition had said, they should remain on an equal footing with other classes of the community in that respect.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:—

*MR. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) moved an Amendment transferring from lords-lieutenant to municipal and county councils the power of recommending to the Lord Chancellor the names of persons for appointment to the magistracy. He said that if no Amendment of this character were carried as the number of persons who would be eligible for the magistracy would be greatly increased, there would be political wire-pulling by bringing pressure to bear upon Members of Parliament to recommend names to the Lord Chancellor. He thought that the power to make recommendations to the Lord Chancellor should not be vested in the lords-lieutenant, and the effect of this Amendment would be to abolish that power or customary right. If that were not done Members of Parliament would be appealed to by people, who had supported them in their elections for recommendation to the Lord Chancellor. They knew that now Members of Parliament were being largely appealed to for the purpose of obtaining these appointments from the Lord Chancellor, and the effect of the Bill as it stood would be greatly to increase that number. For if there were no property qualifications, and he entirely agreed there should be none, then almost every man would be eligible. Some years ago he had been the means of obtaining the abolition of Party patronage so far as Members of the House had the right of nominating to the Postmaster-General persons for the positions of postmasters and postmistresses, for he moved the Resolution in the House which brought this about. The abolition of that right freed them from the evil effects of such patronage, but the effect of the Bill, if carried without such an Amendment as he proposed, would be to carry them back to the system of Party patronage in its worst form; a system from which the country had suffered in the past.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 1, line 6, at the end, to add the words 'and in lieu thereof shall be substituted nomination by every town council within the meaning of The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, of any borough or city having a separate commission of the peace, and any county councils established under The Local Government Act, 1888, within whose jurisdiction any municipal borough not having a separate commission of the peace or any petty sessional division of a county is situate who shall, subject to the conditions hereinafter mentioned, respectively have the right to nominate a

person or persons for appointment to the office of a justice or justices of the peace within such borough, city, or county respectively in the manner hereinafter described.' "—(*Mr. Luttrell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR W. ROBSON said the Amendment which his hon. friend had proposed was in reality seeking to introduce a new mode of appointment. He had introduced a Bill upon this subject which ran to the extent of about a dozen clauses, which provided for the manner in which names were to be submitted, the number of persons entitled to nominate, and the particulars of the persons to be sent to the Lord Chancellor. In other words, his hon. friend by this Amendment sought to introduce his Bill into the measure now before the House. Without discussing the merits of the Bill, he thought the House would agree with him that it was by no means a convenient method of Parliamentary procedure. He thought it would be fatal to the present Bill if he accepted the Amendment, because the subject dealt with was a very wide and important one. The Amendment might be good or bad so far as its objects were concerned, but it, at any rate, raised a very large question of elected magistracy which could not be established in the way in which the hon. Member had suggested.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield) reminded the Solicitor-General that he had seen propositions of this kind accepted notwithstanding the fact that they involved the adoption of consequential clauses and provisions. He congratulated the hon. and learned Gentleman upon having omitted all mention of experience of that kind, and upon having evaded expressing the opinion of the Government upon the supremely important proposal that the magistracy should be fundamentally revolutionised in its composition by being placed upon an elective basis. He hoped the House would observe that the present Government entirely omitted to seize the opportunity presented to it of condemning the principle contained in the Amendment.

LORD R. CECIL said he did not think this question ought to be disposed of without more consideration. The proposal which had been put forward was to take from the Lord-Lieutenant the power of recommending persons for appointment as magistrates, and to transfer that power to the town and county councils throughout the country. They had in the past seen something of the working of the system of recommendation by the Lords-Lieutenant, and he did not think every one would say that it was a satisfactory system. Not long ago there was a Lord Chancellor in office of the opposite party to that to which he belonged, and he indulged in a correspondence with the Lords-Lieutenant and impressed upon them the desirability of recommending gentlemen for appointment as magistrates who were of the same political party as hon. Members opposite. He remembered that upon that occasion the Lords-Lieutenant were put to enormous exertions in endeavouring to find suitable gentlemen to occupy the positions of magistrates [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] They were indeed put to the most enormous trouble to discover gentlemen whom they thought were qualified to discharge the duties of magistrates, and they occupied a large portion of their time seeking out those gentlemen, and they did not succeed in finding them to any great extent. The Solicitor-General had declined to express an opinion on behalf of the Government with reference to this proposal, and it was possible that he had the fate of the Attorney-General before his eyes, because if he expressed that opinion he knew that the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil would probably tell him that he was wrong. Personally, he was in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility than the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he was not absolutely at the command of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil and his colleagues. He thought the proposal contained in the Amendment was an exceedingly bad one, because it suggested not only that there should be an elective system, but that the appointments should be recommended by the town council and the county council. That would mean that at every election for a town council the question whether the magistrates appointed by the outgoing council had discharged their duties in a way which commended itself to the particular localities concerned would be considered by the electors. He could not conceive a more infamous principle, and he hoped the House would express in the most contemptuous way possible its opinion of the proposal contained in this Amendment.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said he understood that the proposals contained in this Amendment sought to introduce into the Government Bill, by means of a very lengthy Amendment, which it was very difficult to understand, practically the whole contents of another Bill. He agreed that the present system of appointing magistrates was open to some considerable objection. In Liverpool the City Council elected the Lord Mayor, who was chairman of the bench of magistrates for one year by virtue of office, and during the following year he continued still to be a magistrate. He ceased to be a justice altogether at the end of two years, if some high official did not in the meantime see his way to appoint a few magistrates and to include him. It would be agreed that a man who had passed through such a great office as that of Lord Provost in Scotland or Lord Mayor in England should not cease to be a justice when his term of office was over. This subject was different altogether from that dealt with in the Bill before the House, and he agreed with the Solicitor-General that it was highly inconvenient that one subject should be dealt with in the Bill, and that by an ingenious Amendment it should be proposed to introduce an altogether different subject in order, by a side issue, to get something with which the Bill had nothing to do. He could not see his way to vote for the Amendment, which, if adopted, would only make confusion worse confounded.

Question put and negatived.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

LORD R. CECIL said it appeared to him that the principle involved in the clause was a bad one. He did not maintain that only those who had a certain qualification should be entitled to be county magistrates. At the same time he did think that a qualification of some kind was required, and this Bill merely proposed to strike out the qualification without putting anything in its place. He should be compelled to vote against the clause if it was pressed to a division.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 273; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 51.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Dev'np't.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Causton, Rt Hon Richd. Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cherry, R. R.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J (S Pancras, W
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Glover, Thomas

Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Harmsworth,Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,John Deans (Fife,West)
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lea,HughCecil(St.Pancras,E.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever,W.H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon.David
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J,
MacVeagh,Jeremiah(Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.

M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J.Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Pickersgill Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond,John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Rt.Hn.E.(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, HerbertL. (Cleveland

Scott,A.H.(AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (HawickB.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.WH(Somerset,E.
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,WDudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White,J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond(Merioneth)
Williams,W. L. (Carmarthen)
Wilson,Henry J. (York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W.(St.Pancras,S.)
Wilson,W.T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse,Lord(Norfolk,Mi
Woodhouse,Sir JT(Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whitely and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt. Hn. Sir A.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie,H. T.(Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase

Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Cavendish,Rt.Hn. VictorC.W.
Craig,Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.

Dalrymple, Viscount
Du Cros, Harvey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hunt, Rowland
Keswick, William
Lane-Fox, G. R.

Liddell, Henry
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lan'rk
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Younger.

Clause 2:—

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he wished to propose an Amendment on the first line of Clause 2, to leave out the words "if otherwise qualified." Clause 2 seemed to be intended to provide that a person might be appointed a justice of the peace in any county although he did not reside in that county, provided he lived within seven miles of it. If that were the idea, it seemed to him that complication would ensue from the words "if otherwise qualified." Those words implied that the old qualification which now obtained was still to be retained, although the qualification was abolished by Clause 1 which had just been passed by an overwhelming majority. Of course, he was aware that it was conceivable that the qualification of real estate must be possessed by a person of the male sex and that a lady could not be appointed to the bench. But the position created by the second clause as it stood, and the first clause as passed, seemed to him altogether illogical. Hon. Members must be desirous, if this Bill became law, that there should not be an obvious and absurd inconsistency between the first and second clauses. He therefore proposed that the words "if otherwise qualified" should be left out of the clause.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified.'"—(*Mr. Watson Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the Clause."

SIR W. ROBSON said that the second clause had no reference to estate qualifications. It referred to residential qualification.

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) said he entirely agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool. If they were to have the abolition of the property qualification as provided for in the first clause, the second clause would create endless trouble. Moreover, the Bill as indicated by the marginal notes would be rendered unintelligible. If, as the learned Solicitor-General had just stated, the second clause referred to residential qualification, it seemed absurd to make that the basis of a non-residential appointment, viz., of a person to be a justice of the peace in a county in which he did not reside.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said he could not follow the Solicitor-General. What they were dealing with in this clause was a person who lived in a county outside the county for which it was proposed he should be made a justice of the peace. He could not see how the second clause as it stood could be reconciled to the first clause. They were told that the Bill did not deal with the estate qualification but with the residential qualification. What was the use if it did not deal with the estate qualification of the words "if otherwise qualified?" To that question they had no answer whatever, and that confirmed the doubt in their minds. The Solicitor-General owed it to the Committee to give them the explanation for which they respectfully asked.

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

———

VACCINATION.

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) took the Chair].

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) rose to call attention to the question of vaccination; and to move "That, in the opinion of this House, vaccination ought no longer to be obligatory on those who regard it as useless or dangerous." He submitted that his resolution was one which was moderate in its terms, was adapted to the feelings of the House and was unobjectionable. The opinion it expressed had been adopted by the House many times before. The original Act of 1867 was found very unsatisfactory for many reasons, and amending Acts had to be introduced. But the Act of 1867 did not itself introduce an absolutely compulsory vaccination system, because according to Clause 29 a parent or guardian might give a reasonable excuse for non-vaccination, but in practice the magistrates did not regard any excuse, or hardly any excuse, as reasonable. Not only that, they inflicted the maximum penalty in all cases. He took it that when Parliament in its wisdom said that the maximum penalty should be 20s. they also meant that there should be a minimum penalty for poorer people, leaving the maximum to be inflicted upon the rich. A shilling fine imposed upon a labourer would mean as much as a fine of 20s. imposed upon a gentleman with £5,000 a year. Indeed, there could be no doubt that a fine of 20s. to a poor man would be equal to a fine of £1,000 to a great many Members of the House. A labouring man could not pay such a fine except by starving himself and his family for months. The result was that many a man had gone to gaol not because he would not pay, but because he could not. He remembered the case of a labourer in Lincolnshire, who applied for an exemption under the new Act several times, but was unsuccessful. Then he was prosecuted, an order was made against him for heavy costs and he was sent to gaol again and again. That seemed to him a most cruel thing. Owing to the difficulties of the enforcement of the Acts, a Royal Commission was appointed, and in 1898 a fresh Act of Parliament was passed. In that year Parliament entirely gave up the idea of insisting upon a compulsory law. The right hon. Gentleman who was then the President of the Local Government Board, and who was his predecessor in the representation of the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire, said, referring to the remarks he had made at the beginning of the debate on that Act, that he found that his former statements were altogether out of date and that he quite recognised that the administration of a compulsory vaccination law was neither necessary nor desirable. That was the opinion of a President of the Local Government Board under a Tory Ministry, he himself being a Tory among Tories. Parliament then agreed to a law which it was thought at the time would prevent the vaccination law from being compulsory. Unfortunately the administration of that law had not been what it was intended to be, and the principle of compulsion had been applied in a worse manner than ever. The Act of 1898 said that a parent or guardian might obtain exemption upon the ground of conscientious objection. But some magistrates made a rule which there was nothing in the Act of Parliament to justify, that the father himself must attend, and they made other very onerous conditions with regard to the granting of these exemptions. One of them was that they would not allow the age of the child to be proved with a copy of the certificate of birth, which cost 3d., but insisted upon the certificate itself, which cost 3s. 6d. They endeavoured to make it as expensive to the poor man as possible. When he did, sacrificing a day's pay, get before them at great expense to himself, they cross-examined him and got him to say something which in their opinion was not an excuse, and then refused the exemption. The applicant was sometimes told to wait till the other business was over, and when that had been concluded, all the magistrates except one left the bench, and he was told that there was no bench and he must come again. That was the way in which the poor fellow was bullied, and if he failed to make another application he was prosecuted and sent to gaol. In this way some of the best citizens of the country were made criminals and degraded. There was a very strong opinion upon this subject in the division he represented, and there were hundreds of thousands of people not only there, but throughout the country, waiting for the glad tidings of great joy that this House, that this Government with all the *eclat* of success behind it, had resolved that anti-vaccinators should not be subjected to these cruelties, and that that liberty upon the possession of which we prided ourselves so much should come at last to be respected. The Royal Commission which sat for seven years came at any rate to one conclusion which he believed was unanimous. They thought that a scheme should be devised by which parents and guardians should be relieved from obligation to vaccinate children, by making before some specified officials a statutory declaration to the effect that the parent or guardian had a conscientious objection to vaccination. The minority, while agreeing with that, went further, and why should not the House accept their suggestion? The Minority Report was to the effect that the Members who signed it thought that a simple declaration by the parent or guardian to the vaccination officer, when he came to vaccinate, that he did not want his child vaccinated should be sufficient to exempt. In a village consisting to a great extent of simple uneducated people, it was not everybody who was able to make a statutory declaration, and it meant expense; and the expenditure of time in finding a magistrate before whom to make it. Why should not a declaration to the medical man when he came to vaccinate, or to the village registrar, be sufficient to obtain exemption? He had known the effort to obtain exemption cost a man who was earning cash wages of 15s. a week, 11s., and then, after being flouted and insulted, he was refused the exemption he asked for. This was an enormous sum to ask a labouring man to lay out to secure exemption. He knew that hon. Members would say that these people were ignorant, but a parent had a right to say whether the blood of his child should be mixed with anything else. He did not intend to argue the question of vaccination and whether it would prevent smallpox, although he strongly held that it was both useless and dangerous. Surely a parent or guardian should have a chance of saying whether his child should be vaccinated or not. There were people of the highest eminence on both sides. There were medical men who said vaccination was a good and harmless operation, and others who said it was a dangerous and useless one. There was no agreement on the subject. There were some questions upon which all scientists were agreed, as in astronomy, but in regard to vaccination they were dealing with something upon which there was no scientific law, and upon which there was an infinite difference of opinion. There were many sources from which vaccine was to be obtained. Horse-grease pox, cow-pox, sheep-pox, corpse-pox, monkey-pox, and smallpox; all these had been used, and according to the pro-vaccinating authorities each was as good as another. Jenner said a very slight puncture was sufficient, other medical authorities said there should be two or three punctures. The King of Prussia said there should be ten punctures, but he was a determined man. The Local Government Board said there should be four punctures, which should leave four scars of large size. Since the Local Government Board had published that order, one of the greatest authorities on vaccination had said that now they had got so skilful in applying the vaccine that a person might be vaccinated and hardly any mark be left at all. There was an enormous difference of opinion upon this subject. Then with regard to the immunity from smallpox, how long did the immunity last? He had heard some doctors say, in the face of an epidemic of smallpox they vaccinated themselves every few weeks, others said every few months. Some said that immunity should last for a year or two, whilst others again said five years, and others ten years. So long as there was all this difference of opinion, why in the name of wonder could not the people decide for themselves whether or not they should have their children vaccinated? Everybody admitted that the vast majority of smallpox cases occurred among vaccinated people. Vaccination was made compulsory in 1853, and eighteen years afterwards the heaviest epidemic of smallpox in this country took place—in 1871–2. The major portion of the people who died then were vaccinated. When we knew all these things, surely there was some little ground for allowing liberty of action to those parents and guardians who would rather not have their children vaccinated until there was some more definite knowledge as to the way in which it should be done, and the good that would result from it. Some three years ago, a deputation waited upon the then President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long), who, after hearing the speech of the deputation, said he was inclined to agree with Dr. M'Vail, one of the authorities on the pro-vaccination side, that primary vaccination of itself was really almost a farce. Those were the words of a President of the Local Government Board, who administered a compulsory

Vaccination Act. That in itself condemned anything in the nature of compulsion. That Gentleman also said that he thought it would be advisable if it was made a little clearer what was efficient vaccination. There was not a Member of the House who would differ from that statement. It certainly was desirable that it should be made a little clearer what was efficient vaccination before vaccination was made compulsory by Act of Parliament. He thought in deciding upon this question it was also desirable to take into consideration the opinion and the feeling of the country. Members of the House were not bigoted advocates of anything in particular. They had their views, but they were not bigoted men, and they found an enormous amount of support for the freedom of the people in this matter. Many Members supported him in this matter; in fact, it would take him a quarter of an hour to read out the names of all those who had pledged themselves to vote against compulsory vaccination. The Act of 1898 was an admission on the part of the Government of the day that the vaccination of previous years was condemned, because they had entirely altered the method. Up to 1898 it had been arm-to arm vaccination. Great authorities upon vaccination had said that that was absolutely necessary, but in 1898 all that was altered, and everyone had to be vaccinated with calf lymph, which had not been found satisfactory. Until there was some recognised system of efficient and safe vaccination, he thought we should not continue along the sad and melancholy road we had traversed so long. He held in his hand a certificate of the death of a child born in a village in the Sleaford Division. The child was vaccinated last autumn at the age of seven months, and within a short time it died of the effect of that vaccination. The side of the head and the arm rotted away as the result of the child's being vaccinated with glycinerated lymph. He knew of another case, that of a soldier, one of four who were vaccinated together with glycinerated lymph. They all became ill, and this man rotted to death. Was it to be wondered at that healthy people did not wish to have their children vaccinated? He and his wife in Sleaford saw some very sad sights. They saw one child in awful torture with matter running from both eyes as the result of vaccination, and when they saw the child again the nerves of the eyes were destroyed. That vaccination was not performed by a medical man who took the responsibility for what he did; it was done by the supreme will of the Imperial Parliament. It was terrible that people should have to submit to a law which in operation inflicted disease and disfigurement. Parliament had an awful responsibility, and he was quite sure that this Government, which called itself Liberal, would not enforce this law for very long. In one case a woman showed her face all disfigured, and did not want her child to suffer in the same way. "We cannot help that," said the magistrate. "Fined £1 and costs." And, according to the reporter, the woman went from the Court weeping bitterly. He did not want to argue against vaccination that night, but he did plead for a little liberty for suffering fellow-subjects. He begged to move.

*Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside) said that in rising to second the Resolution of his hon. friend he desired to express his regret that such a Resolution should have been rendered necessary by the absence of some promise from the Government. The approximate case for this Resolution lay in the fact that the intention of the law of exemption had been in all directions frustrated and in many cases grossly over-ridden. He had read of cases in which conscientious objectors who had gone to magistrates for relief had been met by the most arrogant refusal, because the magistrates had said they were not satisfied that the objector properly understood the subject. Such cases inclined some of them to think that the administration of the law would be considerably improved by sending a few magistrates to prison. But that was not possible, and in the absence of such a line of action this Resolution asked that the already declared intention of Parliament should be given effect to in the fullest manner. He ventured to say that the grounds upon which the great majority of magistrates acted were not scientific at all. Not one magistrate in ten knew as much of the subject as was known by numbers of anti-vaccinators. He had in his hand an article sent from the *British Medical Journal* which he said deliberately was written in a vulgar and foolish style, in an utter unscientific temper, and was totally unworthy of a journal which professed to represent a scientific profession. As a matter of fact the merits of vaccination could only be established by statistics, and he humbly claimed that he was as able to judge the value of statistics as any doctor or magistrate. He had had sent to him a document by the Jenner Society, which existed in order to do justice to the memory of Jenner. Such a society, he ventured to say, was a scientific imposture. Jenner's vaccination had been abandoned by all students of the pathology of the subject. Its utter unsoundness had been exposed by the pathologists who had gone into the matter. Jenner obtained a grant from this House acting in a panic, and a penal law was established upon a medical theory which had been thrice over repudiated, and was no longer held by any student of the subject at all. Vaccination of to-day was Pasteurian, and had nothing whatever to do with the practice of Jenner. The medical profession in this matter was simply seeking to gloze over and hide the fact that three times it had changed its ground. Jenner's system absolutely broke down in the first few years after its institution; Seely and Badcock's system practically broke down in the great epidemic of 1870 and 1871. The nation was hoodwinked by the medical profession of that time, and when the epidemic occurred, instead of admitting that they were wrong, they proceeded to bring forward a series of new theories. To-day they had a theory on the part of pro-vaccinationists that vaccination was useless without re-vaccination, which was an absolute negation of the ground on which vaccination stood for sixty years. The whole history of vaccination was a history of error, tardily acknowledged and glozed over wherever possible. The medical profession was always finding out that it had been in error, and it was a very singular fact that the only medical proposition in regard to which there was serious and angry dispute in this country was the one medical dogma which was financially endowed by the State. They would never have the medical truth on this matter until vaccination was no longer endowed by the State. In this Motion, however, they were not asking for that. They were putting forward a claim so moderate and just that he could not conceive that His Majesty's Government could set their faces against it. Were it not for the activities of anti-vaccinationists, there would be nothing known scientifically to-day of the history of vaccination. He had a number of valued medical friends—he valued their profession above all other professions—but he believed that not one in ten knew anything about the history of vaccination. They were not taught anything scientifically about it in the college, and as a general rule they abstained from making themselves acquainted with the facts in later life. He ventured to say that not one doctor in ten had read Crookshank's great work of research on the subject. The ignorance of the subject was not on the side of the anti-vaccinationists, but on the side of the pro-vaccinationists, who had never inquired into the grounds on which alone the doctrine could be justified. As for the anti-vaccinationists, they consisted to a very large extent of poor, honest people who had the strongest reason for believing that their children, or their neighbours' children, had been injured by vaccination. Hundreds of children had been killed and thousands more had been seriously injured by vaccination. If that were so, no Legislature was justified in maintaining compulsion in the matter at all. He was an anti-compulsionist long before he had ceased to believe in vaccination. It seemed to him that this House would never have established the penal law if it had foreseen that children would be slain by the very thing that was to be a prophylactic. Therefore the case for exemption could only be over-ridden by men who would not apply to this matter the ordinary principles of morality between man and man. Either vaccination was a prophylactic or it was not. If it was, every man could protect himself and his own family as far as he pleased. If it was a prophylactic, there was on that very ground no reason to insist that other men should use that prophylactic. If it was not a true prophylactic it was an iniquity. The medical profession could no longer deny that hundreds had been killed by it, while many had been seriously injured by it, and in face of those facts there was no excuse for the maintenance of coercion. Coercion was monstrous, and he asked the House to pass the Resolution, trusting that it would elicit from the Government the kind of legislation that was needed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, vaccination ought no longer to be obligatory on those who regard it as useless or dangerous."—(*Mr. Lupton.*)

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said he had a very vivid recollection of the debates which accompanied the progress of the Bill of 1898, and he felt sure that if the pledges given by Members of the then Government had been kept there would have been no need for the present discussion. They were assured that an application for a certificate of exemption would be a mere formality. So far from that having been the case, they had seen the appearance of humble applicants before a Bench of magistrates made the occasion for bullying, insulting, and humiliating them. Only humble men were treated in that way. The other day the Duke of Hamilton applied to the Wimborne Bench and was treated with the greatest courtesy and consideration. He contended that in this matter the humblest of His Majesty's subjects was entitled to the same consideration as was shown to the premier Duke of Scotland. It seemed to him that the usefulness of vaccination had never been really proved, and that compulsion at every successive stage had been put upon the community, and authority obtained from Parliament, under cover of promises which invariably had been broken. The House was induced to establish compulsion in the matter of vaccination by the most explicit declaration on the part of the medical faculty that vaccination had given absolute immunity from small-pox. The medical faculty did not say that to-day. In these circumstances the ground of compulsion was absolutely cut away, vaccination was reduced to the footing of any ordinary medical prescription, and was no more entitled to have the adventitious aid of a policeman than any other medical prescription. There was in that day's *Times* a very remarkable illustration of the change of front which pro-vaccinationists constantly executed. He referred to the letter by the Dean of Gloucester, which was also signed by Dr. Bond who represented the Jenner Society. They suggested that vaccination might be postponed until the child was five or six years of age. This proposition proceeded from men who only a little while ago were clamouring for the adoption of the present law, under which a parent who omitted to have his child vaccinated within six months of its birth committed a crime. What was the reason which those pro-vaccinationists alleged for the proposition that it was safe to defer the operation of vaccination until the fifth or sixth year of a child's life? They said it was in consequence of the altered social conditions and improved sanitation. That was going a very long way towards giving up the whole case for vaccination. Anti-vaccinationists had always said that the true prophylactic against small-pox was not vaccination but sanitation. In these circumstances he trusted the House would have no hesitation in passing the Resolution.

MR. SOARES hoped that upon an important question like this, which was being left to the House, they would have some statement from the President of the Board of Trade.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The Motion which has been moved by the hon. Member for Sleaford raises a question which, of course, has engaged my attention as President of the Local Government Board, and in rising to speak upon this Motion, I have briefly to say that, so far as I am concerned, I have not had a great deal of time whilst in my present office to consider and to decide the many points raised by the hon. Member for Sleaford and other hon. Members. The points raised, however, require to be considered now, and in some form or other met or answered by those responsible for the administration of the Department concerned. The hon. Member for Sleaford told the House frankly that he would not argue the merits or otherwise of vaccination, and he said that his chief reason for moving this Motion was to call attention to the harshness of the Act, its cost to poor parents, the cost to the community, the time lost by people in securing certificates and the cost thereof, and the differential treatment meted out by various magistrates in different districts to the applicants for certificates of exemption. It has been pointed out by other speakers that there was differential treatment not only between class and class in regard to those who wished to be exempted, but also that there was a differentiation between the rich and the poor, between the educated and the uneducated, and between those with a smattering of medical knowledge and those who were innocent of the terminology of the medical profession which they had not time properly to understand. There is a good deal of justification for some of the statements made as to the harshness with which the Act in this respect has been administered, and as to the differentiation that is made between various classes of applicants for certificates of exemption. Perhaps I may remind the House, as one who himself has not been vaccinated, that the Act of 1898 is not compulsory. Under conditions that are sometimes objectionable, and even humiliating, any conscientious objector can obtain exemption from vaccination for his children. The difficulty is mainly administrative. The injustice is due to lack of uniformity in administration and to the capricious action of magistrates, who occasionally behave in a manner that is creditable neither to themselves nor to the dignity of their office. It will be the duty of the Local Government Board to prevent the possibility of any differentiation in the treatment of different classes of applicants. According to recent newspaper reports, the Duke of Hamilton applied for an exemption certificate on the ground that he did not think vaccination would be good for his child; and the certificate was immediately granted. A wealthy gentleman of Tunbridge Wells was also granted a certificate, the magistrate overlooking the fact that the birth certificate of the child was not produced, and that no reason for the application was given, although previously applicants had been closely cross-examined by the Bench. The poor workman, whose conscientious objection may be as well grounded as that of the Duke of Hamilton, or of the wealthy gentleman from Tunbridge Wells, is often very nervous in presenting himself at a police-court—I know I was—and unable to express his objection as well as the man in more comfortable circumstances. It has been proved that in the administration of the Act there is such differentiation as ought not to prevail, and that certain magistrates do little credit to the Bench by the manner in which they hector and browbeat poor applicants. In 1905 the Home Secretary was compelled to issue a Circular to magistrates, in which he quoted from a speech of the Lord Chief Justice, delivered at Birmingham, which in many respects is a stronger criticism on the way the Act has been administered than any that has fallen from Members during this debate. This is what the present Lord Chief Justice said—

> "Some magistrates appear to think that they ought to be satisfied that vaccination would be harmful to the child; others seem to think that they were entitled to have medical evidence before them that such vaccination would be prejudicial. He desired to point out that this was not the question which magistrates had to decide, and it was from this point of view that he was desirous of assisting the authorities to secure uniform administration of the law. The section, as he read it, laid down two conditions—one, that the person who applied 'conscientiously believed,' and the other, that he 'believed that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child.' The only question which the magistrates had to entertain, was: Did the applicant conscientiously believe that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child."

Now it is obvious that the magistrates do not carry out the injunction of the Lord Chief Justice, or the representations of the Home Secretary, or the spirit of the Act. I am pleased to say that the present Home Secretary has followed up that Circular by one that is on the eve of being issued and which I am allowed to quote. In it substantially the views of the Lord Chief Justice on the law are expressed, and in one or two paragraphs it goes even further. The Circular says—

> "It is not necessary to the proof of a conscientious objection that a certificate should be produced, or even that evidence should be given of any particular state of health of the child. In order to satisfy themselves that the applicant's belief is conscientious, the justices may think it desirable to ask him the origin and grounds of his opinion, but if that belief is generally entertained, any ignorance on medical, or sanitary, or statistical questions which he may display is no ground for the refusal of a certificate. Applicants frequently state to the Home Office that they have made long journeys to the Court and have lost a day's wage by doing so, but yet have not succeeded in satisfying the Bench, and they urge that the trouble they have taken, and the loss they have undergone, ought to be regarded as a practical testimony to the conscientious nature of their objection. Mr. Gladstone would not attempt to define the grounds on which he thinks magistrates ought

to be satisfied that an applicant's belief is sincere, though it seems to him that such considerations as the above might properly be taken into account "—

and so forth. These two Circulars—one issued by the previous Home Secretary, and the other and stronger one issued by the present Home Secretary—indicate that there is ground for many of the statements made to-night, and I will briefly deal with one or two points before I sit down. I want to bring before the House another objection which I think is a strong one from the administrative point of view and which has not been raised. Everyone will admit, even the Departmental Committee in their Report admit, that the cost of vaccination is becoming serious as the years go on. For instance, in 1899 the cost was £72,000. It grew to £237,000 in 1900, and at this moment it is £270,000. It has therefore increased threefold since 1899. The cost of vaccination in itself, the lack of uniformity in the administration of the Act, the differential treatment accorded to the varying classes of applicants, and the relative disproportion in the fines and penalties imposed upon poor people as compared with rich people who object to the law, all these things have necessarily been brought within the purview of the Department and of myself, and I agree with the hon. Member for the Tyneside division that some of the actions of the magistrates were, as he described them, of an arbitrary and indiscreet character. They were not only humiliating to the applicants, but I believe they have provoked opposition to the Act itself. It is derogatory to the medical profession. I believe that the Act as administered provokes a spirit of resistance to the Act which would not otherwise exist or prevail. In view of all these circumstances I wish to submit to my hon. friend that we cannot get legislation this year. Everyone will admit that, in the light of the fact that we had very little time to go into this very serious question to the extent which I think is necessary in order to do justice to its merits. This is what I would venture to put to my hon. friend. At the present moment I am considering this question in the light of certain reforms which I think are desirable and necessary, and which are, I believe, inevitable. In the first place reductions in the cost of administration are in themselves sufficient to warrant Departmental attention at once. That I can promise the House I shall give. Not only do I give that promise by word of mouth, but I ask the House to believe that I will do this earnestly and seriously. That is point one. The second is that we are bending our minds to the amendment of the existing procedure in the securing of certificates of exemption. In my judgment that can be done in several ways, and I need not go into them to-night. The third point is that we are considering some reform in the direction of a statutory declaration to be made by either parent at a less cost than now. That will be necessary if this Act is to secure the harmonious co-operation of all sections of the community. We also attach a great deal of importance to the suggestion which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green quoted from a letter in to-day's *Times.* It is worthy of consideration—the suggestion, namely, of a temporary suspension of vaccination from early infancy to some sensibly later period when the consequences if disastrous to the individual would be seriously minimised as compared with what they are if vaccination is done in the early life of a child. What is more we will institute an inquiry—not a lengthy inquiry; I do not think it is necessary to have a Committee of this House to do it—into the general working of the Act, and how to meet the points which I have indicated and how the Act could be further amended. Of course opinions differ on the point I am now going to mention, namely, as to the authority that should have the administration of vaccination. The opinion is growing in certain quarters, both among anti-vaccinators and vaccinators, and among publicists generally, that it would perhaps be better if possible to have a transfer of vaccination from the boards of guardians to the health authorities throughout the country. That is variously viewed by different people, but there is a great deal to be said for considering the matter. That is a question to which I will give my immediate attention. We also think that uniformity of practice is urgently desirable, and that some regard ought to be paid by magistrates, in imposing fines upon people, to the capacity of the people to pay. If the hon. Member for Sleaford and his supporters will accept my assurances on the points I have submitted as now engaging my attention, I can also assure them of all the sympathy I can command and all the practical application at my disposal, and I believe that I shall see my way clear to carry out these five or six points and others that will evolve and emerge in the process of some prompt and short inquiry which we hope to be able to make into the administration of the Act as a whole. I cannot see my way to accept the *ipsissima verba* of this Resolution. It would as moved by the hon. Member practically go further than his speech indicated he desired to go. I would sincerely appeal to the hon. Member for Sleaford to be satisfied with the assurances I have given him and to allow the House to come to the consideration of another matter for which there is a great and general demand. I would appeal to him to withdraw his Motion, because legislation this year is impossible. Even if we were to accept his Motion, legislation next year, or the year following, would be absolutely essential to secure the object he has in view. Having made what I consider to be a practical and useful series of sympathetic proposals I appeal to the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) said the people of Scotland were at a serious disadvantage in this matter, because they did not enjoy, even to the limited extent of the people of England, the rights of the conscientious objector. Personally he had been vaccinated, his children had been vaccinated, and he believed in vaccination. Although he believed in it, he did not think it was right that he should impose his belief on those who conscientiously differed from him. He asked the President of the Local Government Board to consider the case of Scotland, and to press upon the Government that similar privileges to those proposed to be conferred on England should also be conferred on Scotland.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.) said he believed he enjoyed the rather melancholy distinction of being the only one of the original members of the Vaccination Commission who now sat in this House. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for his very candid and sympathetic speech. He did not know what effect that speech would have on the mover of the Motion as to the object which the hon. Member had in view. He might say, on his responsibility as a member of the Royal Commission, that, whatever differences of opinion there were on that body as to the amount of protection, if any, which vaccination gave against smallpox, and as to the injury caused by vaccination, and whatever difference of view there was as to the value of sanitary organisation, the whole Commission was unanimous on the point that the honest objector to vaccination should not be subject to any penalty whatever, and *a fortiori* not to repeated penalties. Seven members of the Royal Commission —Lord Herschell, Sir J. Paget, Sir C. Dalrymple, Sir E. Galsworthy, Mr. Dugdale, Sir M. Foster, and Mr. Meadows White—favoured a statutory declaration being made or an appearance before the board of guardians. Two others—Sir Guyer Hunter and Mr. Hutchinson—favoured appearance before a magistrate who should accept a sworn deposition as exempting from any penalty. Four others, including Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Picton, Mr. Bright and himself, recommended in a separate Report as follows—

> "We think that the modified form of compulsion recommended by our colleagues is unnecessary, and that in practice it could not be carried out. The hostility which compulsion has evoked in the past towards the practice of vaccination is fully acknowledged in the Report. In our opinion the retention of compulsion in any form will in the future cause irritation and hostility of the same kind. The right of the parent on grounds of conscience to refuse vaccination for his child being conceded, and the offer of vaccination under improved conditions being made at the home of the child, it would in our opinion be best to leave the parent free to accept or reject this offer."

Now he understood that the Act of 1898 was intended by its authors to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission; and if that Act had carried out that intention they would not now have been discussing the Motion of the hon. Member for Sleaford. The Act of 1898, however, carried out neither the recommendations of the Royal Commission nor the intentions of its authors. Mr. Chaplin, who was then President of the Local Government Board, said when the Bill was under discussion on July 20th, 1898—

> "The question at issue is perfectly clear, whether vaccination should be voluntary or

compulsory in future. . . . I am compelled to recognise that the administration of a law for compulsory vaccination would be impracticable in the future."

And in a subsequent debate the right hon. Gentleman said that he recognised that it would not be possible—

"For any local authority or any Government in the world to send people to prison for refusing compliance with the law and to be vaccinated under existing conditions."

And yet they heard from Derby that men were committed to prison under the Vaccination Acts and that compulsion was being exercised. When the Bill got to the House of Lords, the late Lord Salisbury said on August 4th, 1898—

"There is the knowledge that children, and a considerable number of children, have succumbed to the operation of this beneficent law, and the feelings which are worked upon are the deepest, the tenderest, the most tenacious, and the most difficult to overcome in the whole range of human sentiment. That is the state of the facts with which you have to deal. It is idle to tell me that the people are wrong, it is idle to tell me that they are deceived; as long as they have these feelings they will respect them—they are Englishmen—and it is no use to quote to me the precedents of India and Ceylon to show the way that these objections are to be overcome."

He was bound to say that the history of legislation on the subject of vaccination had been far from satisfactory. He could not accept all that had been said by the hon. Member for Sleaford. But no medical man with a reputation to lose would be prepared to maintain the position as regards the preventative power of vaccination or its innocence as to injurious results which were originally claimed by Dr. Jenner; nor could anyone take up the position of Lord Lyttelton when in 1853 he maintained that the medical profession were unanimous as to the certainty of vaccination as a preventative and that the operation was perfectly safe. Then again, the Select Committee of 1871 stated that there need be no apprehension that vaccination would injure health or communicate disease; and that the almost universal opinion of medical science and authority was that vaccination was as protective against smallpox as smallpox itself. No witness examined before the Royal Commission maintained either of these propositions. There were two points brought up before the Commission which particularly impressed him—first, that calf lymph was not necessarily a guarantee against injurious results, and that they were assured repeatedly of the fleeting character of the immunity given by vaccination or re-vaccination; secondly, they were deeply impressed with the influence of sanitation and isolation in dealing successfully with smallpox. The evidence of that was overwhelming in such diverse cases as those of Leicester, London, and New South Wales. In these circumstances he was heartily in favour of the entire abolition of compulsion, and it would redound to the credit of the medical profession, to which he was proud to belong, to be free from association with the policeman and the bailiff. He believed that the enforcement of this one prescription which had been singled out by the State had rather tended to hinder the progress of medical science.

*Mr. LUPTON said that in view of the sympathetic speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board he did not wish to press his Motion. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that in the Bill to be introduced next year Scotland would be included in the immunity. He begged leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

*Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) in submitting a Motion for the enfranchisement of women said that this question was one which had so often been discussed in the House that no new argument could be brought forward for or against it. He and those who agreed with him were not called upon to prove the right of women to be enfranchised. Those who opposed the Motion were called upon to justify their action. He knew of no argument in support of the grant of the franchise to men which did not equally apply to giving the franchise to women. It would be observed that the Motion had been so framed as to declare that sex should cease to be a bar to the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise. He left out of account all such questions as the right of women to be elected Members of this

House, to serve on juries, or whether married women should, or should not, exercise the franchise. What was the history of this Question? By the Reform Act of 1832 it was decided that only male persons should be possessed of the vote. In 1852 Lord Brougham's Act became law, which declared that in every Act of Parliament where the word "man" occurred it should be held to include women. In 1867, when the franchise was extended to the counties, the words "male person" were dropped out of the Act, and the word "man" was inserted. It was then thought that women under Lord Brougham's Act would be entitled to be registered as voters, and as a matter of fact many of the registrars took that view and thousands of women were put on the Parliamentary register. A test case, however, was taken before the Courts, and Lord Esher decided that in the case of a statute which dealt with the exercise of a public function, unless that statute gave express power to women to exercise that public function, the true construction was that the power given was to be confined to men, and not extended to women. The position in which women stood to-day was that they might be property owners; they might be taxpayers; they might be members of the medical profession; they might even be occupants of the Throne, but because they were women, no matter what qualification they possessed, they were disfranchised. He asked this new House of Commons to express the opinion that sex was no longer to be a barrier to the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise. He begged to move the Resolution standing in his name.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) in seconding, said that in view of the late hour of the evening he did not think it necessary to speak at any great length. He supported the Resolution as one who had persistently and consistently advocated the rights of women in this matter. No doubt there were many present who would like to express their opinion, and therefore he would content himself with seconding the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that sex should cease to be a bar to the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise."—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

*Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston), who rose amidst cries of "Agreed," said that some hon. Members might be agreed, but there were others who entertained views different from those which had been expressed. This was not the first time that he had found himself in conflict on this subject with hon. Members with whom he generally acted, and with whom he found himself generally associated in the Division Lobby. Only a few weeks ago a Bill had been introduced by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, which was really, in his opinion, the only honest measure which had been brought forward on this subject. There had been many Bills and Resolutions with a view of eliciting the opinion of the House on this subject, but none of them had made clear what the advocates of female suffrage really aimed at, but the right hon. Baronet's Bill frankly set it out, and admitted that which some of them in the past had asserted in the face of a good deal of opposition to be the real object aimed at. The nature, character, and proposals of that Bill, however, threw a light upon the real subject before the House, and he hoped hon. Members in going into the Division Lobby would bear in mind that they were voting for what he and others had in the past said they were voting for. He had always contended that if they once opened the door and enfranchised ever so small a number of females, they could not possibly close it, and that it ultimately meant adult suffrage. [Hear, hear.] He was glad to hear that cheer, because he wanted to point out what adult suffrage really meant. He was afraid that hon. Members had not really thought out what adult suffrage must lead to. If they consulted the last census and ascertained the proportion of male and female adults in the country, they would find that there were upwards of 750,000 more female than male adults in the kingdom. There were also some hundreds of thousands of men engaged in the naval and military forces of the country, and in travelling. The government of the country would therefore be handed over to a majority who would not be men, but women. In his own constituency there were at least 800 or 900 men who were unable to record their votes in consequence of the nature of their occupations, and there were also very many others in similar position in other constituencies. He asked hon. Members seriously to consider what this would lead to. Were they prepared to hand over the government of the country to women, the majority of whom were not breadwinners, who had not to bear the burdens, and who did not understand the responsibilities of life? [" Oh ! "] Well, that was his opinion, and he was entitled to state it. He was sometimes described in regard to this question as a woman-hater, but he had had two wives, and he thought that was the best answer he could give to those who called him a woman-hater. He was too fond of them to drag them into the political arena and to ask them to undertake responsibilities, duties, and obligations which they did not understand and which they did not care for. He was certain that if the women of the country were polled, the majority of them would either take no notice of the application or record their votes against this proposal. What did one find when one got into the company of women and talked politics? They were soon asked to stop talking silly politics, and yet that was the type of people to whom hon. Members were invited to hand over the destinies of the country. The mover of the Resolution did not now propose that every woman in the kingdom should be accorded the Parliamentary suffrage; he only proposed that the right should be assimilated as between men and women, and asked what the barrier was against such a proposal. There seemed to him to be a very important barrier, and that barrier had been set up by Nature. The hon. Member's quarrel was, in fact, with Nature and not with those who opposed him. [" Oh ! "] Hon. Members might sneer and jeer at the views which he advanced, but at least he was sincere. If he were not, he should not stand up and be prepared to enter the Lobby in opposition to the Motion of the hon. Member. It was a very serious matter; it was a revolution when one came to consider the mighty changes which would be involved in the transference of the balance of political power from the men to the women of this country. They would have at least a million more female than male electors in the kingdom, and therefore he was justified in saying that it was a political revolution which it was proposed to adopt after one or two hours' discussion. There were other arguments which might be used, but he did not want by prolonging his speech to resort to anything in the nature of a mean trick, and to delay the division if the House desired to take one. If they did, and the Motion succeeded, the responsibility would lie upon those who voted for it and not upon him. He should have done his duty in pointing out the dangers involved in taking such a step after an hour or two's discussion. There was another aspect of this question which it was, however, very difficult to deal with in a public assembly. He had heard it said that the introduction of women into public life would have a humanitarian influence upon it, and he wished to say a few words as to that aspect of the question. In the past they had contended that if women were given a right to vote they must also be given a right to sit in this House, but those assertions were then regarded as blasphemous doctrines. The mask was however, now torn aside, and the Bill of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean made it quite clear that if they gave women a right to vote they must give them a right to sit in this House. Let hon. Members ask themselves whether there were not infirmities from which women suffered and from which men were exempt. There were times and periods in women's lives when they required rest not only for mind but for body, and to drag them into the political arena under those conditions would be cruel indeed. There were also periods, especially in a married woman's life, when it would be absolutely impossible for her properly to discharge her duties as a Member of this House. Hon. Members had to face that difficulty when they decided this matter in the Division Lobbies. Then there was another aspect of the question which should present itself to hon. Members. Supposing women were Members of this House and a division was imminent, what influences would be used by women on men and men on women in order to secure votes? Every Member knew that a man dealt far more tenderly with a woman with whom he was arguing a point than he did with a man.

Women were creatures of impulse and emotion and did not decide questions on grounds of reason as men did. It might be a crude kind of logic that men resorted to in order to arrive at a conclusion, but some kind of reason was employed by men. It was also said that if women had the right to exercise the Parliamentary franchise and sit in this House it would infuse a spirit of humanitarianism into legislation. That could hardly be expected when one came to reflect upon the number of appeals which had been made to women in all classes of society to abstain from wearing feathers in their hats in order to prevent the most beautiful birds in creation, which were fast disappearing, from being altogether destroyed. If they would not listen to such appeals as that, it was not likely that the presence of women in this House would impart to legislation more humane considerations. The way in which women rushed to hear cases in our Law Courts and listen to evidence which no woman of refinement or decency should listen to, went very far to prove that women would not introduce any higher order of morality or humanitarianism into the legislature of this country. It was not only because he thought that women were unfitted by their physical nature to exercise political power, but because he believed that the majority of them did not want it and would vote against it, that he asked the House to pause before they took the step suggested by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil. He believed that if women were enfranchised the end would be disastrous to all political Parties. He therefore asked the House to pause before it took a step from which it never could retreat.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that in a House so overwhelmingly in favour of the Motion there was hardly any need of a speech in order to support it, but he would like to say a few words, more especially as it was something in the nature of history repeating itself. The hon. Member for Haggerston some few years ago made a speech upon this question of very much the same nature as the speech he had just delivered, and then he had the opportunity of replying to him, as he intended to do to-night. The hon. Member for Haggerston was not, he thought, quite consistent throughout his speech. The hon. Member commenced by stating that so far from being a woman-hater he was highly pleased with the sex. That was, of course, a very gratifying remark, and it cheered the House very much; but, unfortunately, the hon. Member did not maintain that attitude all through his speech, because he went on to level what was undoubtedly an attack against women. In the concluding portion of his speech he told the House that so far from introducing humanitarian influences into public life, women would have probably quite the contrary influence, and he told the House that women were cruel, inasmuch as they wore sometimes the feathers of beautiful birds in their hats, and, further, that they were so abandoned that whenever any disgraceful cases came into the law courts women almost entirely filled the galleries. As an Irishman he said that was a monstrous insult to put upon women. He did not know whether English gentlemen were prepared silently to acquiesce in an insult of that kind, but certainly no statement of the kind would be tolerated in the country he came from. He looked at this question from the point of view of one who had all his life opposed slavery in any shape or form. He held that any of God's creatures who were denied the right of a voice in the affairs of the country in which they lived were more or less slaves. Men had no right whatever to assume that they were so infinitely superior to the other sex created by God, that they alone should have the guiding of the destinies of the country. Lunatics, criminals, drunkards—the very dregs of the population might vote so long as they were men. But women of the most exalted intelligence, women of the highest virtue, women who had performed the most signal service to the State, whose intellect was admitted, who were ornaments in literature, in art, and in every walk of life, were to be debarred from the right which the lowest men in the country were freely allowed to exercise. There was no consistency in that. It was illogical, and they had no right to assume that the sex which had given queens to this country, and some of the greatest workers to the world, should be placed under a disadvantage and a disability which put them almost upon the same level as the dumb beasts of the field. After all, there was something to be gained from experience in other places with regard to this matter. The hon. Member for Haggerston said that progressists would be making a great mistake if the franchise were extended to women. He (Mr. W. Redmond) did not pause to think whether it would be to the disadvantage of any one side. He contended that women were as entitled to their opinions and to give effect to them as men. They might judge from what had taken place in other countries, where the democracy was quite as much alive as, if not more alive than, it was in this country. Let them take the Commonwealth of Australia. With the exception, he believed, of one state in the whole continent of Australia, women were enfranchised. Every woman and every man of good character and of age was entitled to vote for the Federal Parliament. The result had been, not a preponderating vote in favour of one particular class or Party in the State, but the return to Parliament in many cases of the very best men obtainable. When he was in Australia the whole of last year he ascertained this fact beyond all others from the exercise of the female franchise, that no man was supported for Parliamentary honours by the women of the country unless he could show an absolutely clean record, and was a perfectly consistent man from a public point of view. He ventured to think that the public life of the country was purer, stronger, and better for the influence which had been introduced by the female franchise. Was it not absurd to say that a woman in this country who might be left a widow, who might have the training of her children, the regulating of their education, the forming of their character, was to have no voice whatever in the laws to govern the state of the future citizens of which she had the training? He felt that it would be altogether unbecoming to pursue this topic further, beyond stating that in other parts of the world the influence of women in political life had been for the betterment of the community at large, and he appealed to all parties not to be influenced by the sickly—not to say disgusting—considerations which had been put forward from time to time, but to remember what they owed throughout their lives, from their very childhood, to the influence, care, affection, and tenderness of womanhood. If they remembered that, they would vote for what he called freedom, and place those who were their best friends—who had been their mothers and their guides throughout life—upon terms of equality with themselves.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.) said the hon. Member for Haggerston had stated that when they mentioned politics to the average woman she resented the idea of discussing such silly things. He thought that was a lamentable state of things if it were true, and it was a condition of things which could be remedied only by giving women a more intelligent and natural interest in the political questions of the day. It was a lamentable thing that more than one half of the population of the country should be indifferent to the political interests of the nation. Men used to talk like that a few years ago, and it was only the extension of the franchise that cured them of the habit. It had been said that this Resolution might be regarded as the thin end of the wedge to admitting women to seats in Parliament. He noticed that the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had carefully limited his Resolution, and he did not think any one who voted for it would be affirming the principle of women sitting in the House of Commons. He hoped the House of Commons would always be at least the married man's sanctuary, and he, at any rate, should always strongly resist any such invasion of the privileges of the predominant partner. He did not know what the view of the Government was upon this question, and he would like to know whether this Motion had the sympathy of the Government. He understood that the intention of the mover was to adopt Lord Brougham's proposal, that wherever the word "man" occurred in any Act of Parliament it should include women. He begged to support that suggestion.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said that nobody could deny that to make such a change as this in our electoral system would be to take a very big step indeed. The Motion was said to be a simple one. The hon. Member for East Clare had appealed to Members to vote for the Resolution because women were their best friends, and to do this in memory of what they owed to their mothers. It was rather a curious fact that the great majority of women were opposed to being enfranchised. [Cries of "No, no."] It was in the name of women that this vote was being asked for. The majority of women believed that their duties lay in their own homes, and they did not want to take part in elections. The House had not yet heard a word from the Government upon the question. They were now being asked to affirm a principle which involved the greatest change in our constitutional system. The hon. Member for Haggerston had pointed out that there were more women than men, and therefore if they carried out this principle they would be placing the balance of the political power in the hands of women. The proposition was that sex should be no bar. He assumed that what the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil desired to see carried out was universal suffrage. That meant that every married woman would have a vote, and then there would be a double vote in every household. That showed how little this subject had been considered. The House were being asked to affirm that a woman was to be the same as a man for all electoral purposes, and surely before they registered a solemn decision of that kind they were entitled to know the view of the Government. He was opposed to the extension of the franchise to women, and he did not think that women wanted it. He did not think it was desirable to bring women into electoral contests. It was no discredit to women to say that they were opposed to having the franchise. On the contrary, he believed it involved a denial by them in favour of the part which they were more qualified to play in our lives. If they were enfranchised they would be brought into the rough and tumble of political life. The hon. Member below the gangway said it must not be assumed that if they were to enfranchise women they would justify their admission as Members of this House. He heard the same statement made nearly twenty years ago, when they were discussing whether women should have votes in the election of Members of county councils and other local authorities. Those who were opposed to their inclusion used the argument which had been used to-night that the time would come when they would expect also to be Members of these governing bodies. From the time that women became entitled to vote at these elections Parliament had not had one session in which suggestions had not been made that they should also be entitled to sit as Members of these bodies. It was impossible to argue this question fully in an hour and a half. He thought it was a matter in which they should have the advice and counsel of the Government in order to know whether they were voting upon a live issue upon which the Government were prepared to make themselves responsible if they had the opportunity, or whether the House was only to vote on an academic question which merely involved an expression of opinion by individuals without any liability to Parliament hereafter. In order to give adequate discussion to a question of this gravity they should have a much longer period for debate than had been occupied to-night.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said that if this had been the first session in which this question had been mooted he might have been impressed by the objections of the right hon. Gentleman. But as one who had served in the House for nearly twenty-five years, he had certainly heard this subject discussed during the last ten years when the right hon. Gentleman and his friends were in office. The right hon. Gentleman had blamed the Government for not intervening earlier in the debate, in order to show whether this was a live issue or not. He would have attached more importance to that expression of opinion from the right hon. Gentleman if he had not had some recollection of earlier debates on this subject when the late Government left it an open question to be decided by the House. The present Government proposed to follow the example of the late Government. He regretted that the leader of the House was unable to be present to express his opinions on the question; but he might tell the House on the Prime Minister's behalf that the subjects of franchise and registration were now under consideration, and that the Government had no wish to interfere with the discretion of the House in deciding on the question that evening. The subject had always been left to the House to express a free opinion upon; and though he was the last to deny the vast importance of the question, when it came to be dealt with as a practical matter, yet in the first session of a new Parliament it was thought desirable that the House should have the freest possible opportunity of expressing its views upon it. That was the course which the Government proposed to take, and as far as he was concerned he would vote for the Motion.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that a most important principle was involved in the Motion before the House. But the Motion of which the hon. Member originally gave notice, and which he had altered, was in terms vastly wider. The present Motion was in narrower terms, but he thought the hon. Member would be candid enough to say that he proposed it intending to use it as the thin end of the wedge. The House should not decide upon this important question after only just an hour's discussion. This was a question of far-reaching importance, but nobody who was not in the confidence of the hon. Member opposite thought that the Motion dealing with it would be reached that night at all. By his proposal the hon. Member was endeavouring to more than double the number of voters in this country at one stroke. Very few of the people who were proposed to be enfranchised desired to be so enfranchised. [Cries of ' No, no."] On every occasion hitherto when the franchise was extended to males, such as in 1832, in 1867, and in 1885, not only had various inquiries and commissions been held and instituted, but there had been violent agitations throughout the country in favour of such extension; but there had been no signs of any real and genuine agitation in favour of women's suffrage. [Cries of dissent from the Ladies' Gallery.] He knew that there were some who had asked for it in quite an irregular way, but there was no evidence on the part of women as a body that they desired that the franchise should be extended to them.

MR. STUART (Sunderland): Oh yes, they do. [Loud cries of "Hear, hear" from the Ladies' Gallery.]

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: My hon. friend says they do. [Cheers from the

Ladies' Gallery.] No doubt the hon. Member believed that there were some who asked for it. If the hon. Member succeeded in his Motion, what logical reason was there why women should not come into this House ? It was perfectly true that a few women who might be reckoned wise by one Party and misguided by others went to a recent meeting in the Albert Hall and waved flags, chiefly upside down, he heard; and, as he gathered from the recognised organs of public opinion, they besieged in a most disorderly manner the doors of the Prime Minister in Downing Street. But could anybody seriously say that such an agitation on the part of a few women was sufficient justification for doubling the electorate of this country ? His right hon. friend the Member for Forest of Dean introduced a Bill the other day, the meaning of which was that in every class of life women were qualified to take the same position as men. He then joined issue with his right hon friend. Was his hon. friend who moved the Motion desirous that women should be members of this House. The hon. Member was silent.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I do not want to waste time.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: The hon. Gentleman does not answer. Did he mean that women should be members of the Ministry, and that a woman might become a Chancellor of the Exchequer ? [Cries of "Divide" from the Ladies' Gallery.] What was embodied in the proposition of the hon. Member opposite was that women were to be entitled to come into the House of Commons; to sit as Speaker; to fill all public offices; to become jurors and judges, and that in every walk in life women were entitled to the full rights and privileges of citizenship, just as if they were men.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not ?
Mr. Samuel Evans.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS said that his view, and he thought the view of all really sensible men who had considered the subject, was that they did not desire or require the assistance of women in the House of Commons, and that they did not deem it fitting that women should come down into the arena of politics and engage generally in public affairs. They thought that women had their own honourable position in life, that that position had been accorded to them by nature, and that their proper sphere was the home, where they might exercise their good and noble influence in the sacred circle of the family and the home. Women would be neglecting their homes if they came into the House of Commons, and when they would be compelled to attend public meetings and to read all the newspapers and Blue-books and other dry documents, so as to fit themselves for the franchise. In no country in the world except in some of our Colonies had women enjoyed such rights and privileges of citizenship. [Loud cries of "New Zealand, Australia" from the Ladies' Gallery, and "Order, order". from the floor of the House.] His view was that all the public duties of citizenship ought to be imposed upon man and man alone. If women were to be entitled to the privileges of citizenship, they ought to share its responsibilities, and to perform its duties. Would it be desirable that women should have to go out to battle ? although he dared say that there were some women who would like to do so. Was it suggested by the Motion that every woman over twenty-one years of age, whether single or married, and whether possessed of property or not, should be entitled to the franchise ?

[At this point cries were heard from the Ladies' Gallery which completely interrupted the proceedings on the floor of the House. Some voices were heard to shriek out "We will not have this talk any longer," "Divide, divide," "Divide, divide"; "Vote, vote, vote;" "Vote for Justice for women," "We refuse to have our Bill talked out," "You are true liberty loving Liberals! You do not believe in equality and justice."]

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: I think it is desirable that the Ladies' Gallery should be cleared.

[Renewed cries of "Divide," "Vote, vote," "Vote for Justice for Women," from the Ladies' Gallery.]

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I desire to ask, as a point of order, whether it is in accordance with decency that a policeman should be called into the Ladies' Gallery to turn the ladies out.

*The SPEAKER: I am unfortunately the only person who cannot see what is going on. When the first interruption took place I gave instructions to the attendants that the Ladies' Gallery should be cleared.

*Mr. SAMUEL EVANS, continuing, asked whether there could be any argument in his favour stronger than what had just occurred.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are men always orderly? Do men never interrupt?

*Mr. SAMUEL EVANS: The hon. Member often does; and often greatly to our amusement.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: It is not only I.

*Mr. SAMUEL EVANS: We have never had interruptions from men in the Strangers' Gallery such as we have had to-night from the Ladies' Gallery.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: We never make references to them.

*Mr. SAMUEL EVANS said he always tried to be in order and he thought it perfectly legitimate that he should say that the strongest possible argument against the Motion was what had just occurred. Did hon. Members desire that what had taken place in the gallery should be repeated on the floor of the House? Did they suppose that such exhibitions were approved of by the mass of the women in this country? There had never been a vote of any considerable body of women in favour of the Motion of his hon. friend, though it was true that the proposal had been supported at men's meetings at which some women were present; but was it to be supposed that when a mere handful of women assisted by some men adopted a resolution they voiced the feeling of the women of these kingdoms? If all women were enfranchised, as it was proposed by this Resolution, they would at once swamp the votes of the men. An abstract Resolution of the House of Commons meant, or ought to mean, that those who voted for it were prepared to put it into speedy effect, and to take legislative steps to do so without delay. Were hon. Members prepared the next day to vote for a Bill to give effect to the Resolution if it were passed? He did not know what the theoretical view was, but the practical view was the one he took, and that was that a Member should not vote for a Resolution in the House of Commons unless he was prepared to see the proposal embodied in legislative enactment. Why did the hon. Member not bring forward something more practical? If the hon. Gentleman would give his attention to the reform of the registration law he would support him, because there were very many men who were entitled to vote who had no vote and could not get one. If the hon. Member proposed a Motion for manhood suffrage he would have his support, because he had always held that the mere fact that a man had a house did not give him more brains than a man who had not one, and that mere occupation or ownership of property alone was not the proper qualification for the franchise. When they had still some hundreds of thousands of men without a vote who took an interest in and who studied politics, surely it was a very strong order to ask the House of Commons to agree to give a vote to every woman at one fell swoop, and so make the number of women electors far exceed that of the men voters of the country.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

ALIENS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) moved to report progress.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) appealed to his hon. friend to withdraw his Motion.

MR. WEIR declined, and said he had not had much consideration from the hon. Member.

MR. KEIR HARDIE also appealed to the hon. Member.

MR. CLAUD HAY said he believed the hon. Gentleman had himself voted for this very Bill and this very clause.

Committee report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

Mr. Samuel Evans.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2:

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'if otherwise qualified'."—(*Mr. Watson Rutherford.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'if otherwise qualified' stand part of the clause."

And, it being after Eleven of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ALKALI, ETC., WORKS [STAMP DUTY].

Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of a stamp duty on certificates of registration of Alkali and other works in pursuance of any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Alkali, etc., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892, and the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament, of salaries and remuneration and of expenses incurred in the execution of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Eleven o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLV.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army (Annual)		Royal Assent 30th March (1)
Bills of Exchange [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 1^a 5th April (621)
*Consolidated Fund		Royal Assent 30th March (1)
Conveyancing [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 2^a 5th April (621)
Elections (Meetings in School Rooms) [H.L.]	*Lord Burghclere*	Read 2^a 3rd April (288)
*Extradition [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 5th April (621)
Limited Partnerships	*Lord Avebury*	Report 30th March (10) Read 3^a and passed 3rd April (316)
Married Women's Property [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 2^a 5th April (623)
*Matrimonial Clauses Act Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 5th April (621)
Poisons and Pharmacy [H.L.]	*Earl of Crewe*	Committee 5th April (625)
Settled Lands [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 2^a 5th April (624)
Sight Testing Opticians [H.L.]	*Lord Addington*	Read 1^a 5th April (621)
Solicitors [H.L.]	*Lord Alverstone*	Read I^a 5th April (621)
*Wireless Telegraphy	*Earl of Granard*	Read 2^a 6th April (875)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aged Pensioners (No. 2)	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Read 1° 5th April) (754)
*Agricultural Holdings (No 2)	*Sir E. Strachey*	Read 1° 10th April (1192)
*Agricultural Holdings (Scotland)	*Sir E. Strachey*	Read 1° 10th April (1192)
*Alkali etc. Works	*Mr. John Burns*	Read 2° 24th April (1465)
*Army Annual	*Mr. Haldane*	Royal Assent 30th March (14)
*Consolidated Fund (No. 1)	*Mr. Asquith*	Royal Assent 13th March (14)
*Crown Lands	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 2° 10th April (1220)
*Dean Forest	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 2° 10th April (1219)
Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment	*Mr. Cairns*	Second Reading adjourned 6th April (889)
Drunkenness (Ireland)	*Mr. T. W. Russell*	Read 1° 5th April (753)
*Education (England and Wales)	*Mr. Birrell*	Read 1° 9th April (1017) (1083)
Elementary Education	*Mr. Thorne*	Read 1° 2nd April (191)
*Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs	*Sir E. Strachey*	Read 2° 10th April (1229)
Foreign Trawlers (Regulations)	*Mr. Alexander Black*	Read 1° 5th April (754)
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Chas. Dilke*	Bill Withdrawn 24th April (1402)
Hours of Labour (Bakehouses)	*Mr. Wilkie*	Read 1° 11th April (1317)
*Justices of the Peace (No. 2)	*Sir W. Robson*	Read 2° 24th April (1424) Committee 25th April (1543)
Limited Partnerships	*Sir W. Holland*	Read 1° 10th April (1192) Bill Withdrawn 25th April (1588)
Local Authorities Officers	*Mr. L. White*	Read 1° 2nd April (1901)
*Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers)	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 2° 24th April (1465)
Local Registration of Title (Ireland)	*Mr. Cherry*	Read 2° 24th April (1424)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Marine Insurance [H.L.]	*Sir W. Robson*	Read 2° 3rd April (421)
Municipal Corporations (Election of Aldermen)	*Mr. Barran*	Read 1° 3rd April (373)
*National Galleries of Scotland	*Mr. Sinclair*	Read 1° 11th April (1318)
*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*Mr. E. Robertson*	Read 2° 10th April (1219)
*Notice of Accidents	*Mr. Cochrane*	As Amended Considered Read 3° and passed } 24th April (1419)
*Old Age Pensions (No. 3)	*Mr. J. W. Wilson*	Read 1° 4th April (522)
*Open Spaces	*Sir E. Strachey*	Read 2° 10th April (1219)
Petroleum No. 2	*Mr. J. W. Benn*	Read 1° 9th April (1016)
*Police Superannuation	*Mr. Cochrane*	As Amended Considered Read 3° and passed } 24th April (1419
*Post Office (Money Orders)	*Mr. Buxton*	Committee 9th April (1112) Report, Read 3° and passed 10th April (1219)
*Post Office Sites	*Mr. Buxton*	Read 1° 5th April (754)
*Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Mr. Robson*	Read 2° 3rd April (422)
Railways	*Mr. Dickinson*	Read 1° 6th April (952)
Reserve Forces	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 2° 24th April (1465)
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Joyce*	Read 1° 5th April (753)
*Seamen and Soldiers False Characters	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 1° 24th April (1465)
*Seed and Potatoes Supply (Ireland)	*Mr. Bryce*	Read 2° 3rd April (409) As Amended Considered Read 3° passed } 11th April (1319)
Small Holders (Scotland)	*Mr. Alexander Black*	Read 1° 5th April (754)
*Statute Law Revision (Scotland)	*Mr. T. Shaw*	Read 2° 24th April (1465)
*Trade Disputes	*Sir J. Walton*	Read 2° 25th April (1482)
Trade Unions' and Trade Disputes	*Mr. Hudson*	Read 2° 30th March (21)

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Vivisection (Abolition)	*Mr. J. Johnson*	Read 1° 10th April (1192)
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LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

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Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Public Records (Inland Revenue Department),—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents in the Department of the Inland Revenue which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic.] c. 55, s. 1]	2 April	4 weeks
Union of Benefices Act (St. Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square),—Copy of Scheme under The Union of Benefices Act, 1860, for effecting an Union of the Benefices of St. Bride, Fleet Street, with Bridewell and Holy Trinity, Gough Square [23 and 24 Vic., c. 142, s. 15]	2 April	Two months
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Burton upon Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the Borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	5 April	40 days
Prisons (England and Wales),—Copy of Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, appropriating Borstal Prison and part of Lincoln Prison to Selected Male Criminal Prisoners, and providing as to the Treatment of Selected Male Criminal Prisoners between the ages of 16 and 21 under Special Rules [61 and 62 Vic., c. 41, s. 2]	9 April	30 sitting days
Public Records (Prison Commission),—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic. c. 55, s. 1]	9 April	4 weeks
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the City and County of Bristol, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the City and County [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	10 April	40 days

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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